

BINGANG



Club Crosby

December 1991

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For most of you, it is time to renew your membership for the 1992 calendar year. Please follow these directions:

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Editor, BINGANG

P. O. Box 3849

Kirkwood, MO 63122

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The photograph of Bing Crosby and Al Jolson on the front cover is from the collection of Mark

Club Crosby

Bingang

VOLUME LVI, NO. 2

DECEMBER 1991

Our 55th Year!

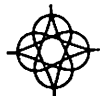
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Readers Write



I am a relatively young fan (29) and especially a fan of Bing's work in jazz-oriented settings (I'm a big jazz fan, and when Bing steps away from the mike I like to hear a tasty soloist step in), but I like his many good popular recordings as well. I am also a rock and roll fan, and I'm sometimes disappointed at the disparaging remarks made concerning rock music in general in *Bingang*. Certainly Bing had his detractors during his early years when he was the newest thing on the scene. Each generation has to create their own new sound, I believe, partly out of rebellion and an unwillingness to simply duplicate what has gone before. This should be clear enough from the history of popular, jazz, and rock music—it is a history of revolutions.

Certainly there is a lot of dross in popular music today, just as I believe there was in the 30's or any other period (and some stuff I've heard confirms my opinion), but the music of the best and most talented will survive, just as the music of Crosby, Armstrong, and Sinatra has survived. They were among the cream of the crop of their eras. There will be survivors from the rock eras.

Already the music of Elvis Presley (particularly his groundbreaking 50's recordings), Chuck Berry, the Beatles, and Bob Dylan from the first two waves of rock music have shown that they have the depth to outlive the ever-growing hype. Certainly fans of an artist who was as innovative and revolutionary as Bing should learn the lesson from history that music will not stay static; there will be subsequent revolutions. You need not appreciate them all to acknowledge them, and they need not detract from the triumphs of the previous eras.

—Jim Determan, Pasadena, CA.

Dear Wayne,

I know we can't pay you for what you and the Gang do for us Crosby fans; and, if we could, it would be like paying for a great masterpiece which is priceless. Good health and "Thanks" like Crosby sings it.

4 —John Sarro, Johnston, RI.

Hi Mark,

Just received the new *Bingang* and enjoyed it.

I wish to comment on the Vernon Taylor article on Bing.

I've always noticed that some of the older members have had mixed feelings about Kathryn. Most of them adored Dixie, and Kathryn could never do anything about what she was quite aware of except endure it all. Let's look at the overall picture of the woman.

She was married to Bing for *20 years*, only two years less than Dixie. She had three children who admit their mother was the tough disciplinarian, relieving Bing of being the *bad* guy this time around. Kathryn taught them to respect their father, which they do until this day.

Some didn't like her moving the Pebble Beach Tournament. I didn't either, but I respected some of her reasons. I have attended the N. C. tournament from the first and have watched her build it into a fine event where all the money goes to charity—something Bing would love.

I met Kathryn and was invited to Hillsborough with the then president of her club Caroline Dawson. We spent a few hours there and I can never repay her for that special time. I found her to be very sweet and kind and very enlightening about her attitude towards family life. She showed us a side of Bing we never knew—things he personally collected and liked.

She and her young family have always had to bear the unhappiness of having their husband and father berated by Gary and his brothers. Nobody listens to them because Gary always has a pat answer such as "they weren't there," which of course they weren't. No one listens to Mary defend her dad, and they just say that the younger three were spoiled. Not so! No one changes that much, and Kathryn in her conversation showed me she was in complete control of her brood. I am sure they have had their personal problems, but they never blame it on their dad and they all try to stay out of the limelight.

So I say to all Crosby fans, give Kathryn a break and look at her track record. I remember that Jack O'Brien, a friend of Bing's, said that Bing's life with Kathryn was a lot more serene.

—Dolores Mayo, Toms River, NJ.

Editor's Page

We are happy to report that the response to our request for original and reprint articles for this issue was excellent. In fact, we received more material than we could possibly use! So we had to pick and choose and postpone some of the articles until the next appearance of *Bingang*. Rest assured that if the material you sent did not appear this time, it will be used in future issues.

We are indeed fortunate to have so many members who are willing to share their Bing Crosby treasures. It isn't every club that is so fortunate!

Please keep those cards and letters, articles and pictures coming. Nothing concerning Bing Crosby is ever thrown away!

Because we wanted to fit as much as possible into our 56 pages, we'll keep the editorial matter brief and confine your editor's ramblings to just one page.

Deaths. We are sorry to report the death of **Rena Albanesi**, who died quite suddenly this year. Rena was a faithful member of Club Crosby for many years and served as president from 1957 until 1970. Until the time of her death she remained active in the club, providing us with many items for use in our journal. A sympathy card was sent to Rena's family on behalf of our members.

Pat Sullivan and Priscilla Koernig have promised us an article about Rena for the next issue.

We must also report the death of **Tom Murray**, who sent us several of his excellent photographs of Bing for publication in *Bingang*. We have no details about his death, but his July magazine was returned marked "deceased."

Arthur Tracy's Address. We have been asked to print "Street Singer" Arthur Tracy's address. Here it is: 350 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019. He would be glad to hear from you.

A Young New Member. We are pleased to announce that once again we have a teenager in our midst! **David Lobosco** of Glenshaw, PA recently joined Club Crosby. He is sixteen and has written an article which we will print next time. Welcome, David!

Greg Van Beek used to be our youngest member (so far as we know), but we're sure Greg won't mind stepping aside after several years of bearing this distinction.

The *Bingang* Discography. It appears that there is sufficient interest in our proposed alphabetical listing of Bing's commercial recordings to pursue getting it together and printing it for our members. Your editor has been working on this in his spare time, but it seems that it will take at least a year to get it together. Is there anybody who would be willing to help with a CD listing? We might as well include the CD's, since it appears that that's about all that will be available from now on. Let your editor know if you can help. We would need information on the takes used, as well as titles and CD numbers.

We had hoped to print a sample page of the work done so far, but we didn't have space for it. There will be more information about possible cost, size, etc., in the next issue. It will be a hefty volume!

Ken Crossland To Step Down. Ken has announced his decision to retire from his position as editor of *Bing*, published by the International Crosby Circle, effective at the end of 1992. The pressures of his work and family responsibilities are the reasons.

The good news is that Ken will remain on duty as the European representative for Club Crosby. We're glad you are staying with us, Ken!

Back Issues Available. We have more copies of the back issues of *Bingang* in your editor's basement that we really need, so we decided to offer them at a reduced price to our members. The July 1988, December 1988, June 1989, December 1989, July 1990, December 1990, and July 1991 issues are available for \$2.50 each, postpaid, while the supply lasts. Better hurry, though, because some issues are in short supply.

Moving? Please don't forget to notify your editor as soon as you know your new address. Every year we receive magazines back from the postoffice for members who have moved and forgotten to tell us about it. Usually we can re-establish contact, but you can't always depend on the postoffice.

Call Me Grandpa. If your editor seems a little slower (and older) these days, it's probably because he became a grandfather for the first time in October. She's a beautiful little girl named Julia Marie and is a real joy!

BING AND AL

The World's Greatest Entertainers

By
Greg Van Beek
Assisted by Edward Greenbaum

Wait a minute, folks, you ain't read nothin' yet!

One of the most successful pairings of Bing's long and illustrious career in radio was the team of Jolson and Crosby. Bing had admired--almost idolized--Jolson from childhood on. In fact, it was reported that he even considered doing an act in blackface similar to Jolson's when he was just beginning his career as Crooner No. 1. One of his early Mack Sennett shorts shows him that way!

But when Bing's style of crooning became popular, audiences turned away from Jolson's style of singing. His popularity and career began waning. By the mid-30's he was no longer a "big draw" performer, and he lapsed into what could be called semi-retirement. This did not suit Jolson well at all.

World War II changed all of that. Almost immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Al began a USO tour of the Army camps. Incidentally, Jolson was very influential in helping to create the USO, and he was one of the first performers to tour with it. He opened each show with "Swanee," which starts out "I've been away from you a long time..." During one of his performances, he had trouble with high notes at the end of "Swanee." As a result, Jolson changed keys and began singing in a style that was quite popular at the time--Bing's! He sang with the same kind of resonance in his low tones that Bing used, and because of this Jolson began winning over new audiences--the younger ones.

The success of the USO tours prompted Harry Cohn, head of Columbia studios and an old fan of Jolson, to make a picture about Al's life. Jolson thought this was a great idea and desperately wanted to play himself in the film. However, at age 60 he was considered too old for the part. A 31-year old actor named Larry Parks was chosen as the one who would play Jolson. Al recorded most of his old hits for the soundtrack, plus a new song, "The Anniversary Song," which later became a hit. Parks did a good job of lip-syncing to the Jolson recordings. The song "Swanee" in the film was performed by the real Jolson in long shots.

After its premiere at Radio City Music Hall on October 10, 1946, *The Jolson Story* became the big

Listen
Tonight
to the

ABC

CROSBY-JOLSON

STORY

on
PHILCO
RADIO
TIME

America's greatest singing personalities

Tonight at
10 P.M.
Turn to
WJZ
770
on Your Dial

Here's a program folks will talk about for years to come! Presenting America's two most popular singers in beloved Jolson songs. There'll be a song in your heart, a chuckle in your throat, a tear in your eye as they relive the days that brought them fame. You mustn't miss it! Put this Tune-In Reminder on your Radio!

N.Y. Times 15 Jan 47

Radio Ads Courtesy of
Jean-Paul Frereault

Tonight on **PHILCO** **RADIO** **TIME!**



Bing **CROSBY**



Al **JOLSON**



Irving **BERLIN**

Bring you the tunes that made
IRVING BERLIN FAMOUS

Imagine! A score of your favorite songs by three of
your favorite singers! Yes—including Irving Berlin,
the genius who wrote this marvelous music! Tune-in
—join-in as they harmonize in these famous hits!

Tonight at
10 P.M.
TURN TO
WJZ

770 on your dial

"Oh, How I Hate to Get Up
in the Morning"
"Easter Parade" "LAZY"
"Alexander's Ragtime Band"
"All by Myself"

N.Y. TIMES 7 MAY 1947

hit of the 1946-47 season, and the country was "Jolson crazy." Al seemed like a new singer to the postwar "bobby soxers," many of whom thought he looked like Larry Parks.

Bing was one of the first performers to invite Al to guest on his radio show, and listeners clamored for his return. On the first show they did together, Jolson received no introduction. Bing said he particularly enjoyed the song "April Showers" in the film and he started to sing it. All at once, Crosby's

voice stopped and Jolson started singing. It was one of the highest-rated Philco shows ever. The show also featured the now-famous "fluffed" Philco commercial sung by Bing and Al.

This show led to three more Philco shows with "Jolie," always on the first week of each month when the all-important Hooper ratings were taken.

The following show, broadcast March 5, featured Bing singing one of Jolson's early hits, "Who Paid the Rent for Mrs. Rip Van Winkle?" as well as a duet of Jolson's current hit "The Anniversary Song."

Probably the best of the Jolson/Crosby shows was heard on April 2, 1947. It was an all-out minstrel show with "Mr. Bones" Crosby and "Sugar-throat" Jolson, along with John Charles Thomas. Together they revived the spirit of the minstrel show, using some of the same jokes Jolson used years before. At the end of the show, Al Jolson sang his most-famous song, "My Mammy," and it brought the house down. Not even Bing, on his own show, dared to follow that!

In his first appearance with Bing on radio, Irving Berlin was the special guest on the 4th Jolson/Crosby show. Irving thanked Bing for singing his songs, and then sang his 1943 hit from *This Is the Army*, "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning." Bing and Al then sang a medley of Berlin's hits, which later was released on a V-Disc. Jolson even sang a little of his favorite Berlin song with Bing, "White Christmas."

On October 2, 1947, Al took over as host of the Kraft Music Hall, the position Bing left the year before. It became the number one musical and variety program on the air waves. On October 16 Bing guested on the "new" KMH and said it was good to be back. Together they traded off singing Gershwin hits. Bing guested for the second (and last) time on Jolie's KMH on January 15, 1948, soloing on "But Beautiful" and singing two duets with Al. After this show Bing and Al did not work together again until November of 1949. In between, Jolson made another picture with Larry Parks, *Jolson Sings Again*.

Al Jolson's last KMH show was broadcast on May 26, 1949. After leaving the NBC show he signed a three-year contract with CBS radio and television on October 31, 1949. Bing was also at CBS, doing his Chesterfield shows, and this prompted another series of guest appearances. The first Jolson-Crosby Chesterfield show was aired on November 30, 1949 (taped a week earlier!). Bing and Al discussed television, a medium Jolson never got into.

My personal favorite duet occurred on Bing's December 28 show. Together, Al Jolson and Bing Crosby sing an excellent version of "I Only Have Eyes for You." Their voices blended perfectly.

The second Jolson guest appearance of 1950 was on February 15. The show was broadcast from San Francisco and featured a medley of duets that included "Yaka Hula Hickey Dula," "Whispering" (the

Old-Time Minstrel Show

Tonight on PHILCO RADIO TIME

"A KNOCKOUT" reports Walter Winchell



BING (BONES) CROSBY



AL (SUGAR FOOT) JOLSON



JOHN CHARLES THOMAS (MUNY LIPS)

There hasn't been a show like this since radio was born. Imagine 3 of America's greatest performers, together in a rollicking old-time minstrel show with all the flavor of the good old days. It will make your heart sing! Don't miss it!

Tonight
at 10 PM
TURN TO
WJZ

770 on your dial

3 great voices blended in America's favorite songs
In the Evening • Beautiful Dreamer
Oh! Suzanna
Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight
Banks of the Woburn

N.Y. TIMES 2 APRIL 1950

song recorded by Bing with Bob Scobey in 1957), and the song from the hit Broadway show *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, "Bye, Bye Baby."

With the 12th and final Jolson/Crosby show, things seemed to have come full circle. The show was broadcast from CBS playhouse #2 in New York, aired May 3, 1950, coincidentally on Bing's 47th birthday. The studio was just "a stone's throw" from Broadway, the scene of Jolson's greatest successes. Bing and Al sang the song that started it all in January 1947, "Ma Blushin' Rosie."

With the start of the Korean conflict, Jolson once again went off to entertain the troops. During World War II Al had to have part of his left lung removed. Many felt the 64-year-old Jolson would not be able to stand the trip. Upon arriving in Korea, he developed a severe bronchial infection, but still he went on. During the seven days he spent doing shows for the servicemen, the sick Jolson did an incredible 42 shows. Al, with only one good lung, had pushed himself beyond the limit.

After Jolson's return Bing booked him on his November 1, 1950 Chesterfield show. Al was to have soloed on "Japanese Sandman" and was to

have been paid high tribute for his recent Korean trip. And, of course, there was to be a medley of Al's hits where Bing would duet with Al.

On Monday, October 23, Jolson flew from Los Angeles to San Francisco to prepare for the show, which would be taped the next day. After having dinner that evening (the 23rd) Jolie complained of indigestion. He had chest pains, and a doctor was called. Suddenly, Al reached for his pulse and moaned, "Oh, oh, I'm going" and sank back on the pillow. One of the world's greatest entertainers was dead.

Bing postponed the taping of his show until the weekend, when Dorothy Kirsten was substituted for Al. If Jolie had lived one more day, there would have been a 13th Jolson/Crosby show.

There are many coincidences in the lives of Jolson and Crosby. Both were born in May and died in October. Both recorded for Victor, Columbia, Brunswick and Decca—in that order. Both had lung surgery late in life, both in January. There are probably many more coincidences. The rare talents that were Bing Crosby and Al Jolson will live on forever.

I want to thank member Edward Greenbaum of Great Neck, New York for all of his help with this article and for supplying me with tapes of the shows. Having been a Jolson collector for over 30 years, he knows his stuff!

Bing Crosby and Al Jolson "Radiography" 1947-1950

(Songs listed are duets by Crosby and Jolson)

1. PHILCO RADIO TIME, Jan. 15, 1947 (ABC from Los Angeles) Songs: April Showers; Ma Blushin' Rosie; The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else; also Philco jingle (fluff).
2. PHILCO RADIO TIME, Mar. 5, 1947 (ABC from Los Angeles) Songs: Who Paid the Rent for Mrs. Rip Van Winkle?; Back in Your Own Backyard; You Made Me Love You; Waiting for the Robert E. Lee; Anniversary Song; also Philco jingle (based on "Dixie").
3. PHILCO RADIO TIME, Apr. 2, 1947 (ABC from Los Angeles) "Minstrel Show". Songs: There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight (w/John Charles Thomas); Oh Susanna (w/J.C.T.); In the Evening by the Moonlight; On the Banks of the Wabash; Alabamy Bound (w/J.C.T.). Note: Jolson sings "My Mammy."
4. PHILCO RADIO TIME, May 7, 1947 (ABC from Los Angeles. Special guest: Irving Berlin (who sings "Oh, How I Hate To Get Up in the Morning). Songs: All by Myself; Alexander's Ragtime Band; Easter Parade. Note: Jolson and Crosby sing a snatch of "White Christmas" together.
5. KRAFT MUSIC HALL, starring Al Jolson, Oct. 16, 1947 (NBC). Guest star: Bing Crosby. Bing and Al sing a Gershwin medley, trading off singing. The only duet is "Strike Up the Band." Crosby sings: Swanee; Lady Be Good; Embraceable You; It Ain't Necessarily So; The Whiffenpoof Song.
6. PHILCO RADIO TIME, Dec. 3, 1947 (ABC from Los Angeles) Songs: Ma Blushin' Rosie; Sunbonnet Sue; A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody; The Best Things in Life Are Free.
7. KRAFT MUSIC HALL, starring Al Jolson, Jan. 15, 1948 (NBC). Guest star: Bing Crosby. Songs: Carolina in the Morning; Beautiful Dreamer. Bing solos on "But Beautiful."
8. BING CROSBY SHOW FOR CHESTERFIELD, Nov. 30, 1949 (CBS from Hollywood) Songs: Back in Your Own Backyard; Baby Face. Note: Bing solos on "That Lucky Old Sun." Gracie Allen appears at the end of the show.
9. BING CROSBY SHOW FOR CHESTERFIELD, Dec. 28, 1949 (CBS from Hollywood). Songs: When the Red, Red Robin Comes Bob, Bob Bobbin' Along; I Only Have Eyes for You; Waiting for the Robert E. Lee.
10. BING CROSBY SHOW FOR CHESTERFIELD, Jan. 4, 1950 (CBS from Hollywood). Songs: Carolina in the Morning; My Blue Heaven; Alabamy

Bound; The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else; All by Myself.

11. BING CROSBY SHOW FOR CHESTERFIELD, Feb. 15, 1950 (CBS from San Francisco). Songs: Yaka Hula Hickey Dula; Whispering; Bye, Bye, Baby; Waiting for the Robert E. Lee.

12. BING CROSBY SHOW FOR CHESTERFIELD, May 3, 1950 (CBS from CBS Playhouse #2 in New York). Songs: Ma Blushin' Rosie; Avalon; Lullaby of Broadway; My Old Kentucky Home. Note Ella Fitzgerald guests also, sings "Stay with the Happy People" with Bing. Show also features a fluff of "Where the Blue of the Night."

Bing Crosby and Al Jolson Discography March 25, 1947

Decca matrix no. L-4386-A --

Alexander's Ragtime Band

Decca matrix no. L-4387-A --

The Spaniard That Blighted My Life

V-DISCS

763B/JD-345 --

The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else

(From rehearsal of Jan. 15, 1947 Philco Show)

814A/J-452 --

Medley: All By Myself; Alexander's Ragtime Band; Easter Parade

(From rehearsal of May 7, 1947 Philco Show)

A NOTE FROM GREG TO THE EDITOR:

I just wanted you to know of some things I may have forgotten for the Bing and Jolson article.

On a TV show about Jolson on the *Bravo* channel a while ago, it was stated that in a 1948 poll to determine the most popular male singer, Al Jolson was No. 1; Bing Crosby was No. 2; Perry Como was No. 3; and Frank Sinatra was No. 4.

Besides getting information from Ed Greenbaum I used a book called *Jolson—The Legend Comes to Life*, by Herbert G. Goldman. Charles Morrison [Mr. Nostalgia] has it available in his last release, and I would recommend it as very interesting reading. Mr. Goldman gives special thanks to Ed Greenbaum in the preface for his help with the book.

Incidentally, many Jolson fans were steamed at Crosby for years because on Bing's November 1, 1950 show there was to have been a Jolson tribute, and those that heard the show say there is no mention of Jolson's passing at all.

On Bing's February 8, 1950 Chesterfield show, Al apparently walked into the studio at the end of the show. It was an unbilled "surprise" appearance. I would assume they just exchanged some dialogue about the following week's show.

I have a part of a radio show from 1935 where Jolson introduces Bing, who sings "On Treasure Island." On a different 1935 show, Jolson introduces Dixie Lee, who sings a song and takes some ribbing about Bing.

BING & AL

(Continued)



On October 26, 1950 CBS issued this press release, following Al Jolson's death.

BING CROSBY:

**"HE WAS THE WORLD'S
GREATEST ENTERTAINER"**

"He was the world's greatest entertainer."

This is Bing Crosby's tribute to the late Al Jolson, who was to have been a guest star on Crosby's CBS show in a program scheduled to be tape-recorded in San Francisco Tuesday (24). Crosby was at his Elko, Nev., ranch when Jolson died in San Francisco late Monday night.

Crosby and his partners, Bill Morrow and Murdo MacKenzie, decided during the night to cancel today's recording session out of respect to Jolson. A substitute program will be recorded later in the week in San Francisco, they said. The program on which Jolson was to have appeared was scheduled for broadcast Wednesday, Nov. 1.

Crosby's high professional and personal esteem of Jolson was widely known in radio circles. Although their styles differed in almost every respect, Crosby and Jolson as a radio team provided some of radio's top listening highlights during the past few years, during Jolson's guest visits to the Crosby program.

When Jolson was signed last Oct. 31 as an exclusive CBS radio and television artist for three years, he decided to limit his initial performances to guest appearances on the network's leading programs. Since Crosby had just rejoined CBS at that time, it was a "natural" for Jolson to make half a dozen visits to the Crosby show during the 1949-50 season.

It was Jolson's initial visits on the Crosby program a few years ago that added impetus to the late entertainer's fabulous "comeback," re-establishing him as a radio luminary and leading to his CBS contract, with its prospect that in time he would become one of television's top stars. At the time of his death, he had not yet made a

10 professional television appearance.



BRUSH WITH GREATNESS

By Mary Ostopak

My cousin, Steve (right) had just started in the Army for basic training. He made many friends, and they decided to take some pictures one day, horsing around, as usual. Some guy came over to them. "May I get in your picture?" he asked. "Sure," they answered. It wasn't until the picture was developed later that they realized that "the guy" was the one and only Der Bingle, Bing Crosby (middle). They then remembered that Bing had been on the base that day to do a show for them.

From GOOD OLD DAYS, July 1991

Courtesy of Helen Tolton

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS PICTURE?



If you can identify this blonde and the comedy short that she and Bing were in, let your editor know. One of our readers has asked about it.

A THING FOR BING IN A BIG, BIG WAY

In an age when raucous rap rules, it's nice to know that one sedate little corner of the universe is being reserved for a kinder brand of pop. In his basement in Laval, Jean-Paul Fréreault, 71, has lovingly assembled a shrine to Bing Crosby. It's a product of 49 years spent ferreting out mementos of Der Bingle. "Bing was *everywhere* in my day—on radio, film, doing charity work," says Fréreault. "He was somebody you could truly idolize."

Before a 43-year career as a materials handler at Canadair, Fréreault briefly earned his living crooning, Bing-style, at

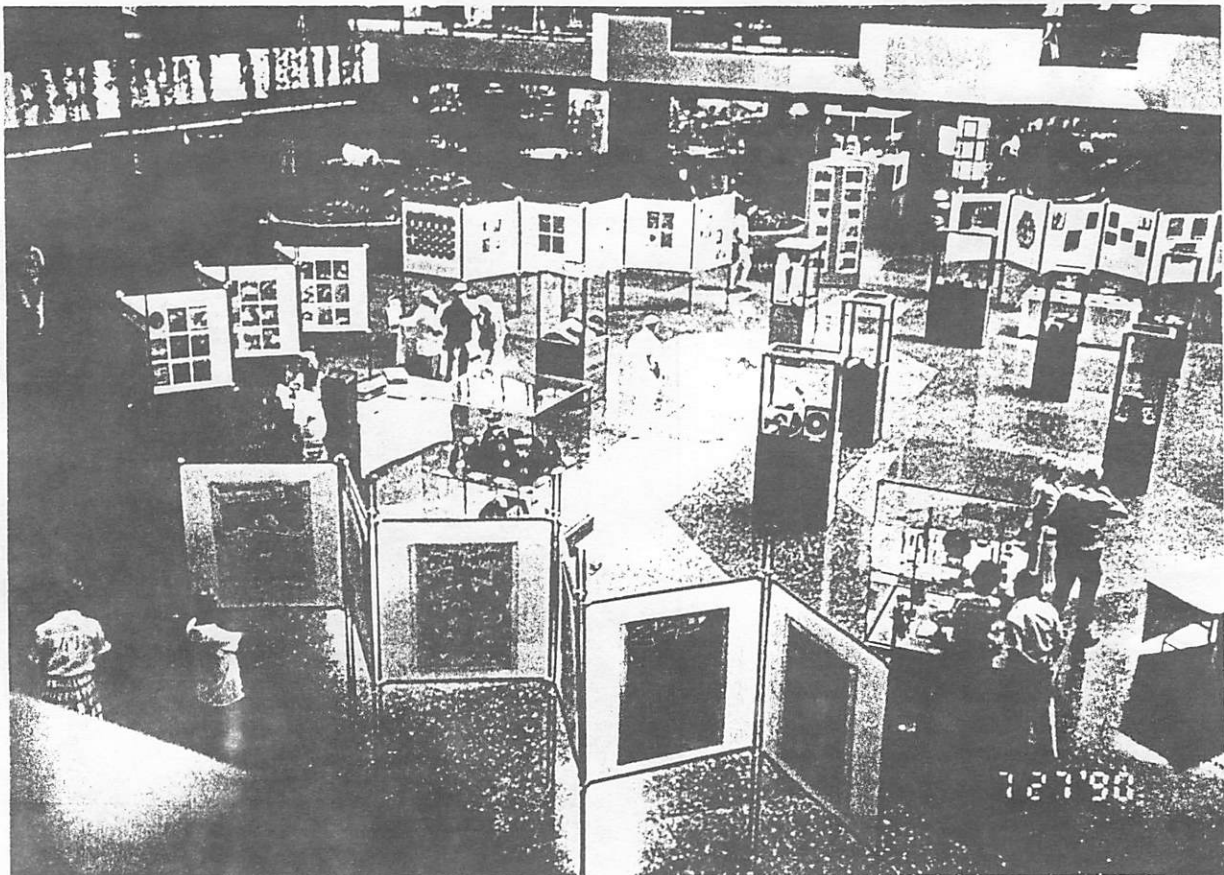
local nightclubs. Today he's the reigning Canadian Baron of Bing and probably among the top 10 Bing collectors worldwide. He has all the 2,321 Crosby releases, from the first 78 platter in 1926 to the latest CDs. Then there's his collection of lobby cards, videos—even reviews of films.

Despite widespread evidence that Crosby was a less than perfect father, Fréreault maintains that the singer was really just as kindly as his showbiz persona. He met his idol only once, for 10 shining minutes in 1976, during Crosby's only local performance. "He chatted. I stared. It was magic." ♦ By Don Weekes



MONTREAL • JUNE 1991

Here's a nice article about long-time Crosby collector and club member, Jean-Paul Fréreault which appeared in Montreal magazine. Apparently space didn't allow for a recounting of one of Jean-Paul's most recent endeavors. Not content to spend his retirement sitting in an easy chair surrounded by the treasures in his Crosby room, he decided instead to take everything "on the road" as a celebration of Bing Crosby the man and artist. As the picture below illustrates, Jean-Paul is not one to do things in a small way. Showcases and display boards holding precious items from his vast collection are enough to fill the entire concourse of a shopping mall! This type of setting makes them accessible to many thousands of people from every age group and walk of life. Jean-Paul says he receives the most comments from people of his own generation who stop to thank him for rekindling long-forgotten memories from the past tied to one of Bing's movies or songs. These kind words make it all worthwhile for Jean-Paul and let him know that all the time and effort he puts into keeping Bing's name and memory alive is really appreciated. We at Club Crosby also applaud the fine job he is doing and wish him continued success. M.S.



"Connecticut is the place for me to be" Bing Crosby Tribute Dinner

September 14, 1991 - Southbury, CT

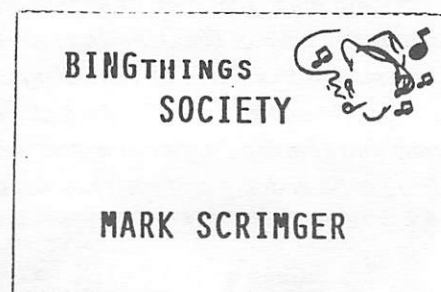
Sponsored by Bingthings Society / Connecticut Crosby Club

My wife, Linda, and I had the pleasure of traveling to the beautiful state of Connecticut this past September to attend a gathering of the Crosby faithful co-sponsored by the Bingthings Society and the Connecticut Crosby Club. A weekend's worth of activities was scheduled, much to the delight of those in attendance. In my case I was also able to talk face-to-face with fellow collectors I'd only known previously through correspondence or phone calls as well as being introduced to many others I hadn't met or spoken to before. Of course, this is the main purpose of a get-together of this type, and I think all who were there will agree that it was a rousing success. Special thanks go to Bingthings' president, Bob Lundberg and his wife, Joyce, and to CCC member and tribute organizer Bill Hunt for making this occasion a most memorable experience for all the Crosby collectors who were lucky enough to be there. This was the third annual east coast tribute to Bing, and preparations are already underway for next year's events. All are invited to attend!

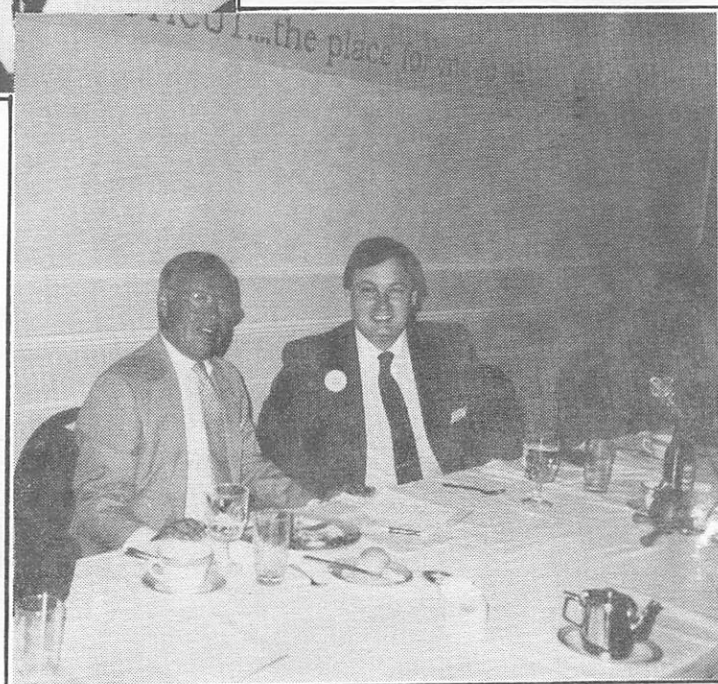
Mark Scrimger



ABOVE:
Bob and Joyce Lundberg



RIGHT:
Frank Smith and
Mark Scrimger



Schedule Of Events

Friday September 13th

3:00 PM -- Check in time
 6:00 PM -- Meet in cocktail lounge
 6:45 PM -- Leave for dinner at Curtis House

Saturday September 14th

*11:00 AM to 12:30 PM -- Seminars
 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM -- No host lunch
 * 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM -- Seminars
 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM -- Buy, Sell, and Trade, including a Silent Auction
 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM -- Rest Time
 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM -- Cocktail Hour
 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM -- Dinner and Program (Program approximate time)
 10:00 PM to 1:00 PM -- Music spun by DJ Jim Johnson for dancing, listening, or visiting with friends

***Seminar Guest Speakers include:**

Helen Ley -- Front Royal Bing Days
 Mark Scrimger -- Bing Memorabilia
 Jean-Paul Frereault -- His Expositions
 Charles Ford -- Starting To Record
 Joe Sinnott -- Bing Illustrations
 You -- Open discussions



RAMADA RENAISSANCE HOTEL



COMMEMORATIVE BADGE

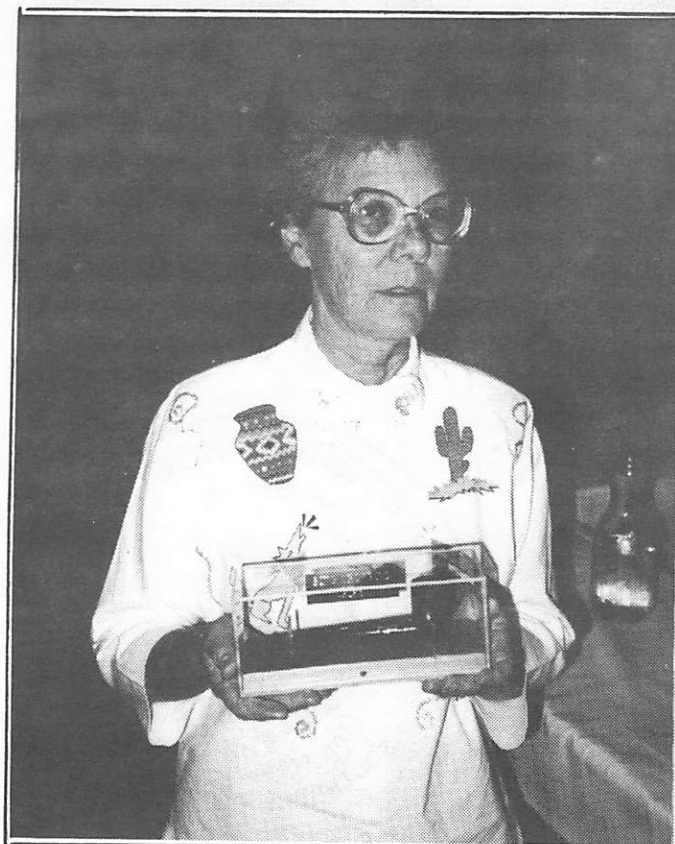


SATURDAY NIGHT PROGRAM

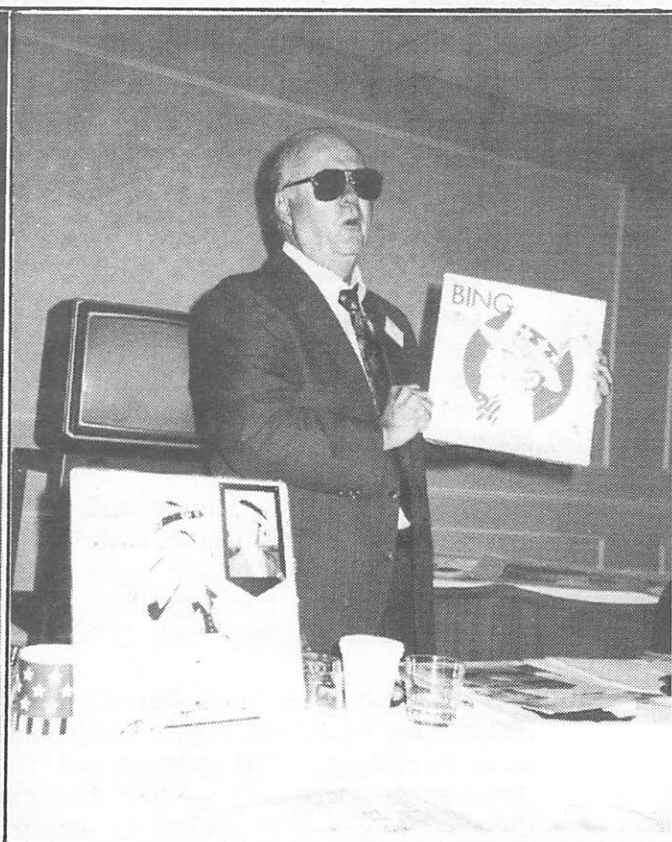
Welcome Bob Lundberg
Remarks Bill Hunt
Invocation John Sarro
Dinner
Master Of Ceremonies ... Frank Smith
Comments Mark Scrimger
Skit "I Needed That"
 Performed by Bill Hunt
 Charles Ford and Bob Larsson
Melody of Crosby Songs...David Haron
 Keith Ingham on the Piano
Closing Remarks Bob Lundberg



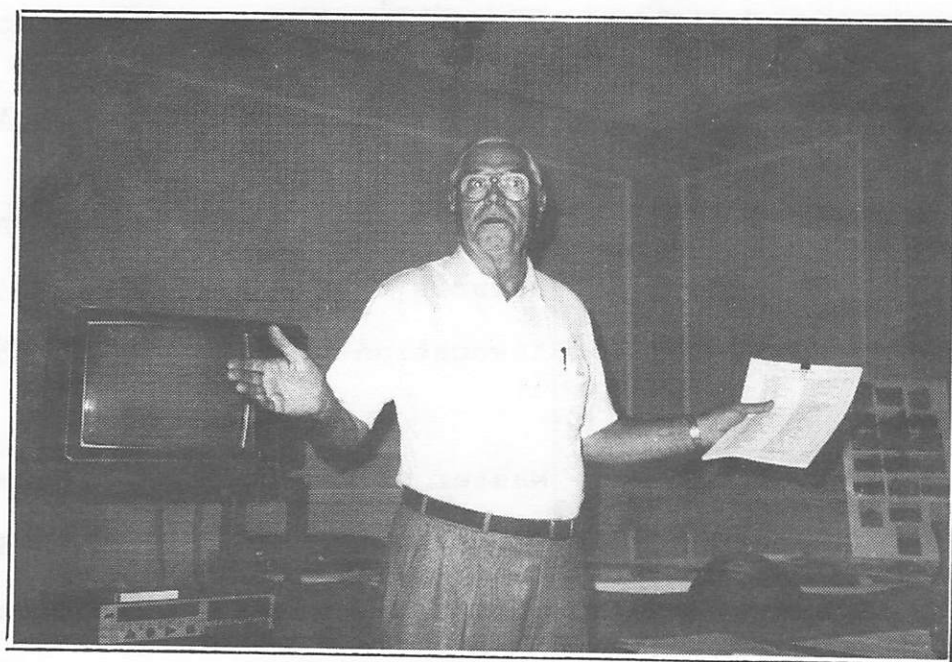
DINING TABLE CENTERPIECE (reduced)
 designed by Billy Dougal



HELEN LEY



JOE SINNOTT



JEAN-PAUL FREREULT

A unique feature of this get-together was the time set aside for seminars on a wide variety of Crosby-related subjects. Outstanding among these were the ones given by the three long-time Crosby collectors pictured above. Along with Charles Ford (not pictured), they gave talks that were well researched, informative, and highly entertaining. In addition, Joe and Jean-Paul were both able to share their experiences of actually meeting Bing in person. Helen once talked to Bing on the phone (after he had first tried to pass himself off as the valet) and eventually obtained one of his pipes, which she proudly

Those in attendance:

CONNECTICUT

Eric Anderson
Billy Dougal &
Rosemary Dougal
Jim and Rosemary Sheehan
Charles Ford
Bob and Iris Larrson
Peter and Josephine LaCava
Aldo and Edel Silengo
Bernice Wachnicki
Pat Morgan
Bill and Judy Hunt
David and Andi Haron
Keith Ingham

MICHIGAN

Mark and Linda Scrimger

NEW JERSEY

Raymond Daly
Dolores Mayo
Genevieve Rapoport
Eva DeMay
Ernest and Jeanne Sutkowski
Steve and Anita Sutton

NEW YORK

Margaret Fitzgerald
Eileen Nugent
Mike Kaptanis
Ed Press
Bill Brooks
Ellie Holloweld
Jim Johnson
Bill Alldread
Frank Smith
Joe and Betty Sinnott
Ted Schoenburg
Carlos and Linda Henriquiz
Farrokh and Hooman Mehran

OHIO

Jack and Angie Darnell

PENNSYLVANIA

Frank and Dorothy McAllister
John McAllister

QUEBEC

Jean-Paul and Rachel Frereault
Jean-Paul and Pauline Gagnon

RHODE ISLAND

John and Gloria Sarro
Glen Russell

VIRGINIA

Helen and Arthur Ley

WASHINGTON

Bob and Joyce Lundberg



My Memories of the 50th Bing Crosby Golf Tournament

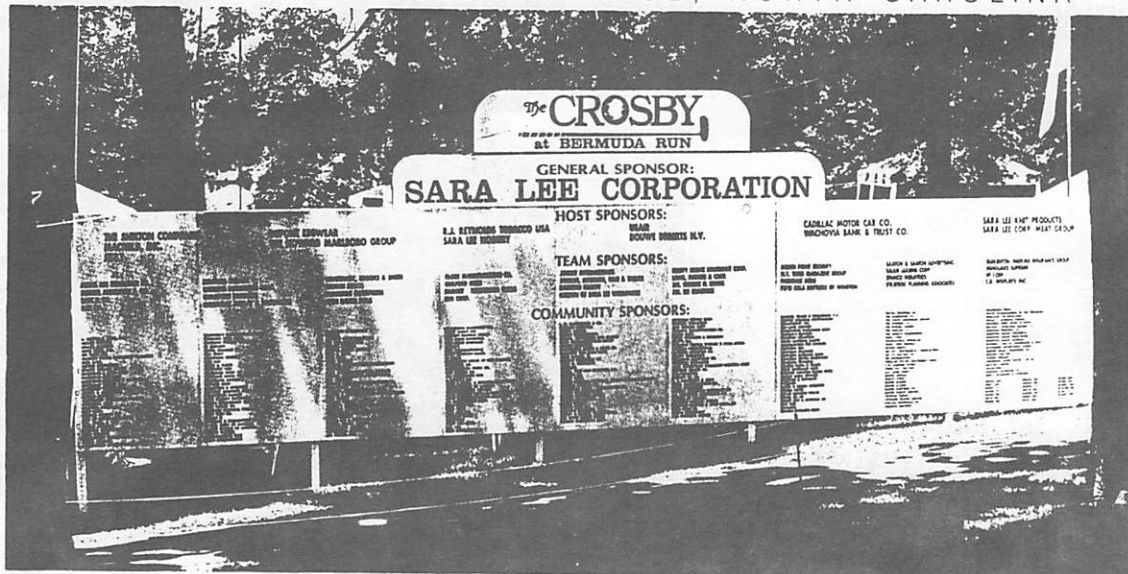
By Robert Pasch

Some of you may already know me from my Bing Crosby tribute for the Bing Crosby Historical Society several years ago or from my performance at the Bingthings Society dinner in Kingston, New York in 1990. What started as a hobby for me back in 1978 has now become a major focus of my time since my retirement in June of this year. I hope to share more regarding this in a future article.

Because of my interest in all things Crosby, my wife and I decided to attend the 50th Anniversary Bing Crosby Golf Tournament held May 30-June 2 this year. It was an unforgettable experience! I was able to meet and talk to Bing's entire second family. I walked with them for seven holes of golf, and I must say I was very impressed with their friendliness towards me and my efforts to keep Bing's music and memory alive through my tribute performances. Alan Fisher, who was Bing's butler for many years, was also in attendance. He was very happy to hear about my tribute to Bing and said that while Bing was alive he was very aware and appreciative of people like myself and other club members' efforts on his behalf. After returning home from the tournament, I was pleasantly surprised to receive nice letters from both Kathryn and Alan.

On the following pages I'd like to share some of the highlights of my trip.

BERMUDA RUN COUNTRY CLUB, NORTH CAROLINA



The 1991 CROSBY

FIFTY YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Stargazing

Autograph Hunters Find Plenty of Prey at The Crosby

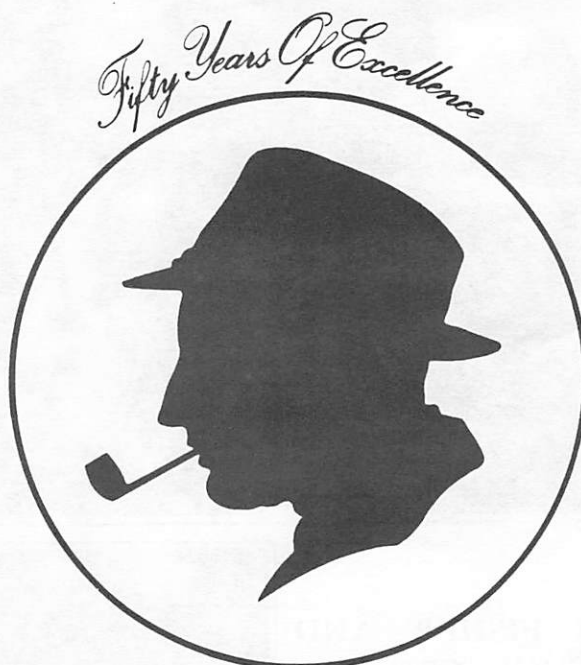
By Jen Pilla
JOURNAL REPORTER

He likes playing golf and smoking a pipe. And, if you ask him nicely, he'll sing "White Christmas" for you in a soothing baritone.

Some people at Bermuda Run might have mistaken him for the late Bing Crosby, but Bob Pasch, who makes his living imitating Crosby, was just one of the 7,000 or so spectators who showed up at Bermuda Run County Club yesterday to catch a glimpse of the stars playing in the first round of The Crosby. More than 90 celebrities are participating in the tournament, which will donate \$1.5 million to charity.

Pasch and his wife, Lenora, traveled from Lansing, Mich., to attend the tournament named for Pasch's idol. Pasch, who collects Crosby memorabilia and has been imitating Crosby for more than 13 years, said that yesterday he met Kathryn Crosby, Bing's widow.

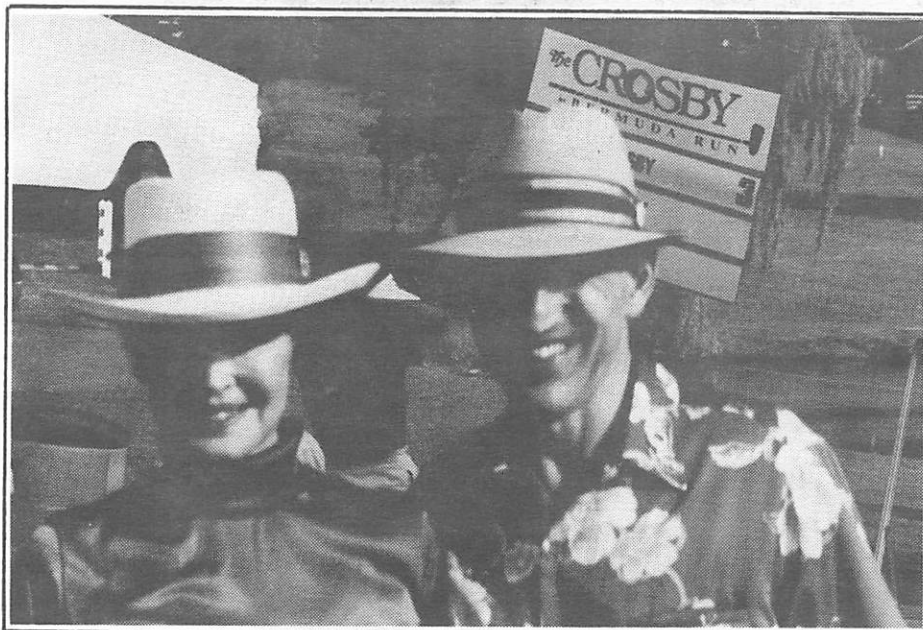
Winston-Salem Journal, June 1, 1991



The 50th Tournament program cover. Printed in gold, it reproduces as black when xeroxed.



Here I am in full Bing regalia--hat, pipe, and Hawaiian shirt--on the second tee. My outfit had the desired effect of turning a few heads and even resulted in a mention in the local newspaper that weekend.

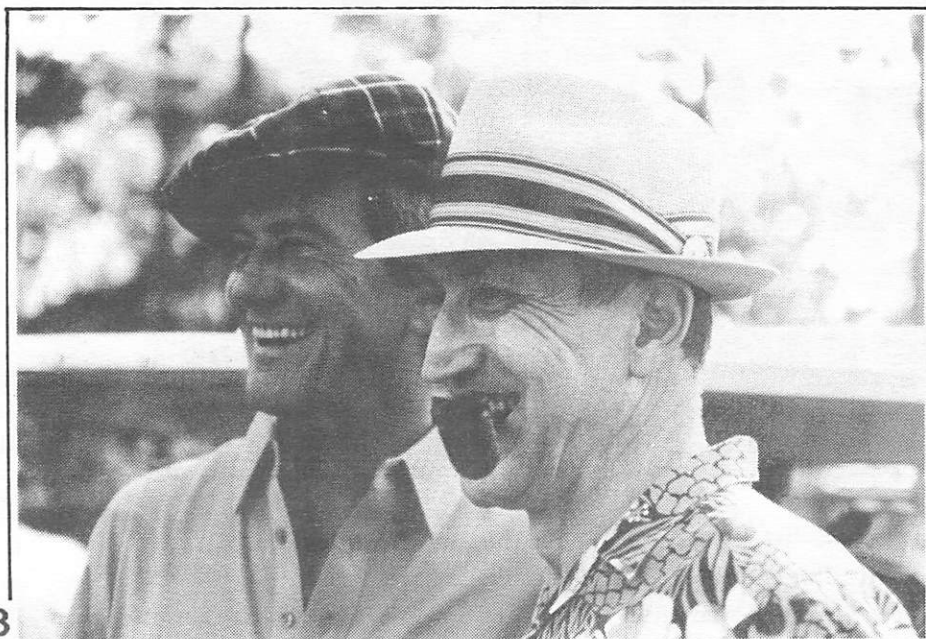
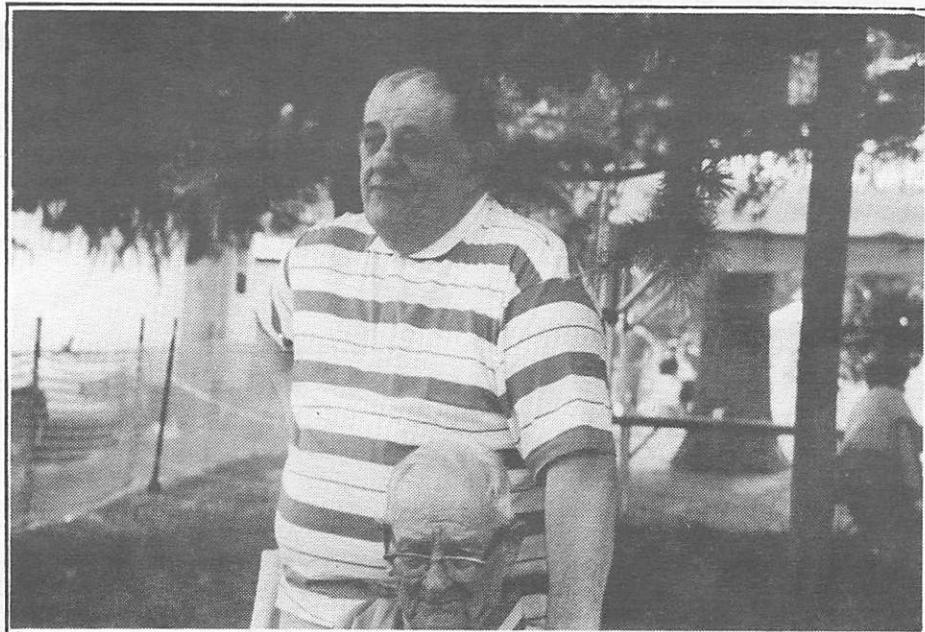


KATHRYN CROSBY
AND ROBERT PASCH

Kathryn was a very gracious lady who made everyone who approached her feel most welcome--not an easy task, considering the pressures of hosting a four-day event.

ALAN FISHER AND
KATHRYN CROSBY'S
DAD, DELBERT
GRANDSTAFF

Although no longer the family butler, Alan was on hand to chaperone Kathryn's 93-year old father around the tournament.



PAT BOONE AND
ROBERT PASCH

Pat said that he has always been a big fan of Bing and has played in over twenty Crosby tournaments over the years.

Johnny Mathis

I REMEMBER

Bing

Alan Fisher

Bob Hope

Pat Boone

Alan Fisher

Bob Hope



Bob—

Crooner

Pat Boone

A TRIBUTE TO BING CROSBY

by BOB PASCH

Alan Fisher

A unique memento I was able to bring back from the tournament was a copy of my tribute brochure autographed by all the members of Bing's second family, Alan Fisher, and three of Bing's show business friends--Bob Hope, Pat Boone, and Johnny Mathis. Needless to say, it is framed and proudly hanging on my office wall.

I would enjoy hearing from fellow club members. You can write to me at: 2061 College Road, Holt, Michigan 48842.

The Crosby Shines For 50 Great Years!



love of golf and his desire to help others," said Bing's widow, Kathryn Crosby, who has assumed the role of tournament host. "We've worked hard to maintain the tournament as a gathering of people who carry on that tradition. Our sponsors, celebrities, volunteers and spectators have a great time and also help us continue to in-

crease the money we make available for charity. I think if Bing could see what **The Crosby** has become, he would be tickled."

While tournament organizers are planning special celebrations for **The Crosby's** golden anniversary, they also see 1991 as an opportunity to continue the event's heritage.

"We are excited about the fiftieth anniversary," said Les Riley, general chairman. "Yet, we think each year of **The Crosby** is special. We want to continue the tournament as Bing originally designed it – as a gathering of friends who love golf and want to help others."

The Crosby for 1991 will be played May 30 through June 2 at Bermuda Run Country Club near Advance, which is only 10 miles west of Winston-Salem.

The tournament attracts corporate sponsors from across the country and brings in numerous celebrities. Last year, Bob Hope not only showed up at the golf course, but he

also performed at the Clambake, the tournament's traditional thank you party for sponsors, celebrities and volunteers.

"Our celebrity players and performers have become a very loyal group of supporters," said Bill Voiers, tournament chairman for Celebrities/Clambake. "The charitable aspects of the tournament are important to them and they also appreciate our hospitality."

Visiting celebrities include television actors McLean Stevenson, Dennis Franz, Robert Urich and Bruce Weitz; singers Pat Boone, Joe Williams, Vince Gill, Gary Morris and Mickey Gilley; and sports stars David Robinson, Boomer Esiason, Willie McCovey and Joe Theismann.

What brings such an illustrious group of golfers to North Carolina? Most will tell you it's the tradition of **The Crosby**.

"I always feel more than just the excitement of the tournament itself," said long-time supporter Pat Boone. "I actually feel a sense of mission about it."

In the past five years, Boone has won \$152,500 for his favorite charity, Mercy Corps International.

While winning players may select any non-profit organization to receive their prize money, the focus of **The Crosby's** efforts is on drug education and abuse prevention.

Last year, more than \$750,000 from **The Crosby** went to organizations involved in the fight against drug abuse. Since 1987, the tournament has raised more than \$2.5 million to support causes that include intervention and prevention programs for at-risk young people in Winston-Salem, Chicago and Atlanta as well as community organizations in North Carolina, Connecticut and Michigan that are building coalitions to fight drug abuse on the local level.

"Our sponsors have responded very positively to the tournament and our focus on drug abuse prevention," said Riley. "Also, we have received tremendous support from the celebrities and our volunteers."

The Crosby

Dates:

May 30 – June 2, 1991

Place:

Bermuda Run Country Club
in Davie County, near Winston-Salem

Tournament Organizers:

Kathryn Crosby
–Honorary Chairman
Les Riley, Sara Lee Corp.
–General Chairman
George Lautemann,
Sara Lee Direct
–Tournament Chairman
Operations
Bill Voiers, AT&T
–Tournament Chairman
Celebrities/Clambake
Pat Considine
–Tournament Director

1991 Purse:

\$1,500,000
• 61 teams receive prize money to designate to charity
• \$400,000 to The Crosby Foundation projects
• \$250,000 to The Crosby Grant Making Program

Tickets:

\$15 per day
Sold at various retail locations & in spectator parking areas during the tournament.

Parking:

Spectator parking at Tanglewood Park with bus service to and from Bermuda Run Country Club.

Buses:

Run continuously from 11 a.m. on Thursday & from 6:30 a.m. Friday – Sunday. Service from Tanglewood to Bermuda Run will stop at 4:30 p.m. each day. Return service from Bermuda Run to Tanglewood parking areas will stop at 7 p.m.

Special Thanks to the Public Relations Committee of **The Crosby** for Their Assistance in the Preparation of These Articles.

HOLY CROSS CEMETERY

Bing's Final Resting Place

BY CHARLES D. BAILLIE



Derek Parkes and Charles Baillie visit Bing's grave. The flowers are from a fan in England.

"The Bells of St. Mary's should ring no dirges--our friend, Father O'Malley, has gone home to God." These were the closing words of the eulogy to Bing given by Cardinal Cooke at the memorial service at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City, on Monday, October 17, 1977. Over 3,000 people attended this requiem mass, with more than 2,000 attending a similar memorial service for Bing at Westminster Cathedral in London.

In contrast, the following day, Tuesday, October 18, 35 people--family and close friends such as Bob and Dolores Hope, Rosemary Clooney, and Dorothy Lamour--attended a private service at 6:00 a.m. at St. Paul's Church in Westwood, California. After the requiem mass, the funeral procession proceeded some six miles south to the Holy Cross Cemetery.

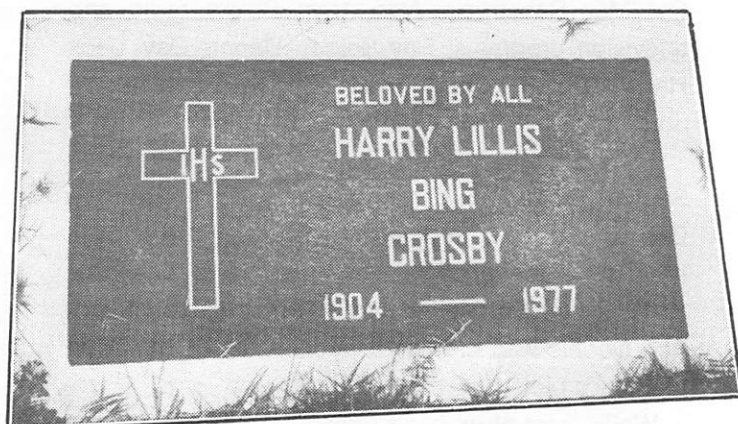
The cemetery, located in the Baldwin Hills area of Culver City, is approximately 13 miles southwest of the Los Angeles Civic Center and about 3 miles

north of the Los Angeles airport. It is very well maintained, with gently rolling hills and attractive plantings and statuary. Headstones are flush with the ground, giving the cemetery an uncluttered appearance. Approximately 200 acres have been developed with an additional 80 acres available.

Derek Parkes, Record Editor of *Bing* of the International Crosby Circle, visited Los Angeles last fall, and we paid our respects to Bing. As we looked for Bing's headstone, the caretaker, Mr. Paul Chaja, volunteered to direct us. He was a very friendly individual, and told us an interesting story of his first meeting with Bing.

Mr. Chaja indicated that he was at the cemetery one overcast fall day a number of years ago. He saw someone in a raincoat and hat looking at the Grotto Area of the park. As this section was not yet open for plot sales, Mr. Chaja approached the man, suggesting he look at other area in the cemetery. The gentleman was adamant, however, indicating that he wanted to purchase six plots "right here."! Realizing that he could not change his mind, Mr. Chaja escorted him to the business office where the gentleman convinced the manager to "make an exception." The check was made out for payment in full--the signature? Harry L. "Bing" Crosby!

Bing's grave is relatively near the entrance to the cemetery in the "Grotto" section. His first wife, Dixie Lee, and his parents are in adjoining plots, and many former friends and associates are also



Bing's Headstone

HOLY CROSS CEMETERY AND MAUSOLEUM

5835 W. SLAUSON AVENUE
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA 90230
(213) 776-1855

Business

Office: Monday to Saturday 8:00A.M. — 4:30P.M.

VISITING HOURS

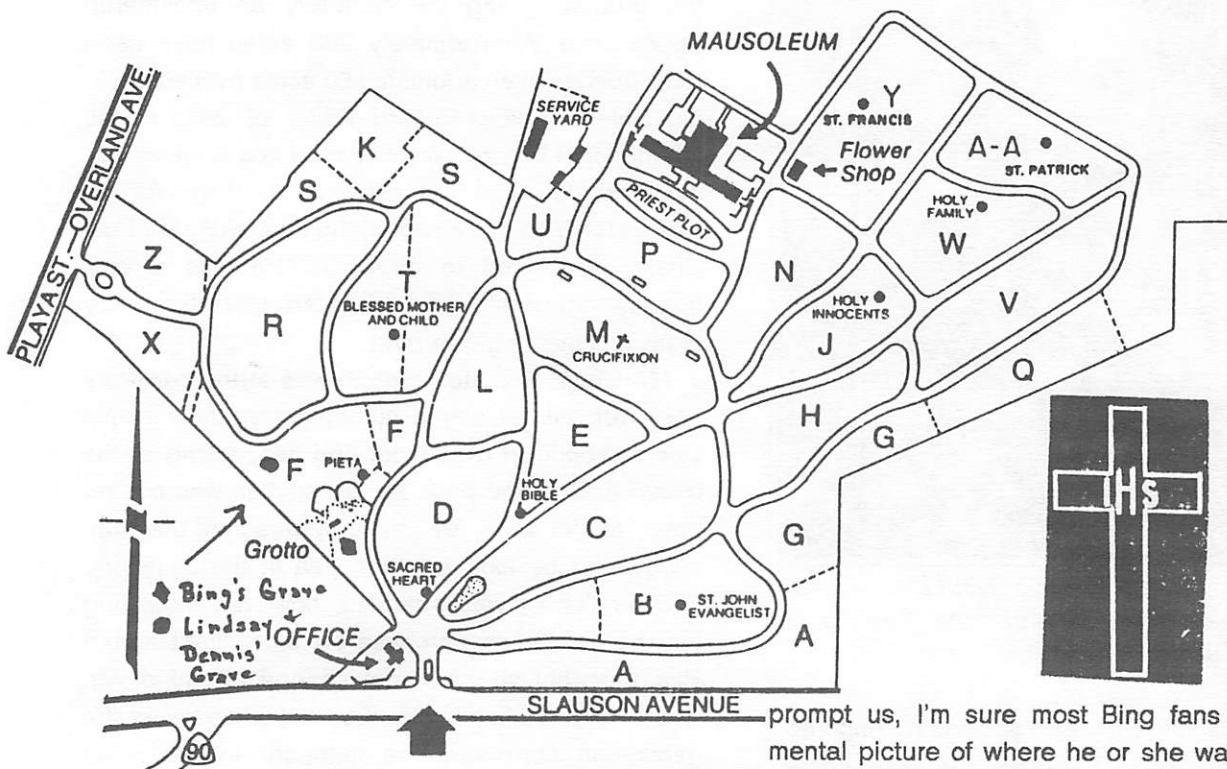
Mausoleum: Monday to Saturday 8:00A.M. — 5:00P.M.
Sundays or Holidays 11:00A.M. — 5:00P.M.

Cemetery

Grounds: Sunday to Saturday 7:00A.M. — 6:00P.M.

DIRECTIONS FROM DOWNTOWN L.A.

Santa Monica Freeway (#10) west to Fairfax/Washington off-ramp. At bottom of off-ramp, turn left on Washington one block to Fairfax. Turn left on Fairfax to La Cienega (dead-end). Left on La Cienega about 3.2 miles to Slauson (righthand lane). Right on Slauson about one mile to entrance of Holy Cross Cemetery. Turn right into Cemetery.



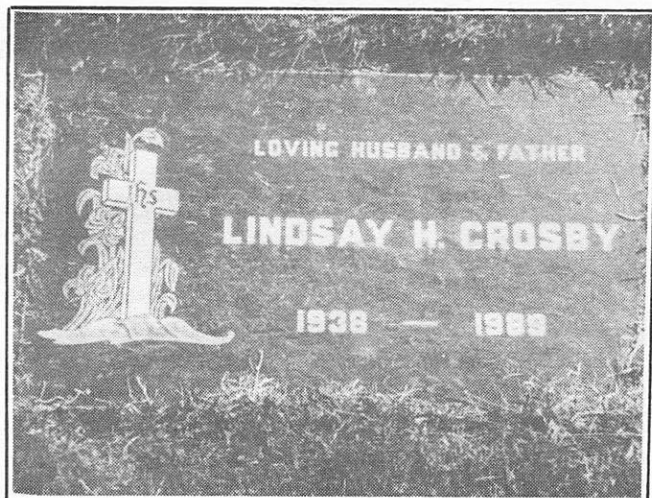
nearby. Mack Sennett, who produced Bing's early comedies; Richard Arlen (*College Humor*); Gene Lockhart (*Going My Way* and *Riding High*); Jack La Rue (*Road to Utopia* and *Robin and the Seven Hoods*); and Pat O'Brien, one of his partners in the Del Mar Racetrack. Also, from Bing's radio and television programs, Ray Bolger, Dennis Day, Jack Haley, "Spike" Jones, "Fibber McGee" and "Molly" Jordan, and Jimmy Durante.

The Lindsay and Dennis Crosby grave is in Section 63-28-F, just 100 yards or so through the Grotto and over a knoll from Bing. There is a headstone for Lindsay, but none as of this date (9-17-91) for Dennis. According to the office personnel, Dennis was cremated and his ashes buried in Lindsay's plot.

While most of us can't remember where we were

prompt us, I'm sure most Bing fans have a vivid mental picture of where he or she was on October 14, 1977. I learned the news of Bing's passing early in the day from my late wife (our song was "It's Easy to Remember"), who called me at the office when she heard the news on the radio. However, it really didn't "hit me" until that evening when I attended a World Series baseball game at Dodger Stadium. As the game was about to start, the public address announcer asked the crowd of 56,000 to stand for a moment of silence in tribute to "Bing Crosby--a super star in the entertainment field and an outstanding sportsman." The moment of silence was followed by the the playing of our National Anthem, but I don't remember who won the baseball game--the Los Angeles Dodgers or the New York Yankees!

Perhaps now that you know a little bit about Holy Cross--and have directions to the cemetery--you will stop and pay your respects to Bing on your next visit to Southern California. I feel that an appro-

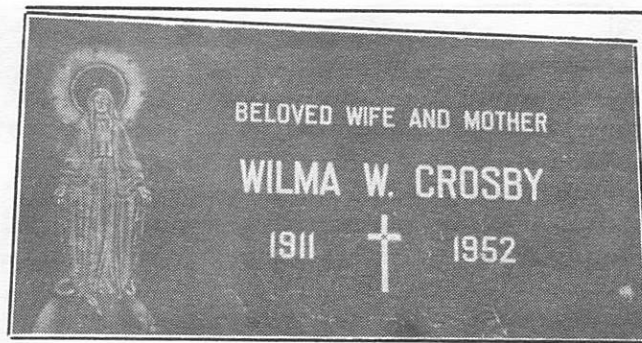


Lindsay and Dennis' Grave

priate close to this story of "Bing's Final Resting Place" is the eulogy to Bing by his good friend and "Road Buddy"--Bob Hope.

"He never said an unkind word about anyone. Whether he was on life's fairway or in the rough, and that's one score card I would be proud to sign. He represented to Americans and to the world so many of the qualities we all like to have. Warmth, sincerity and a passion for life. It's a whole new world for me without him, a little shabbier, I regret. If friends could have been made to order, I would have asked for one like Bing."

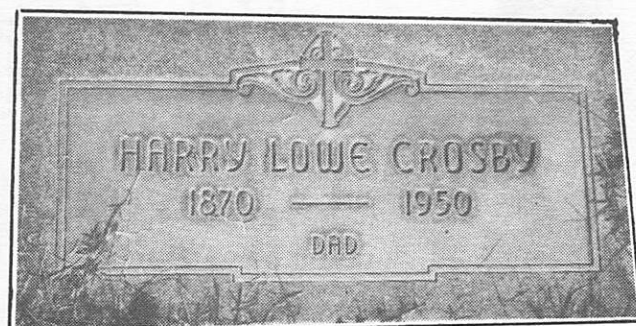
Bob Hope



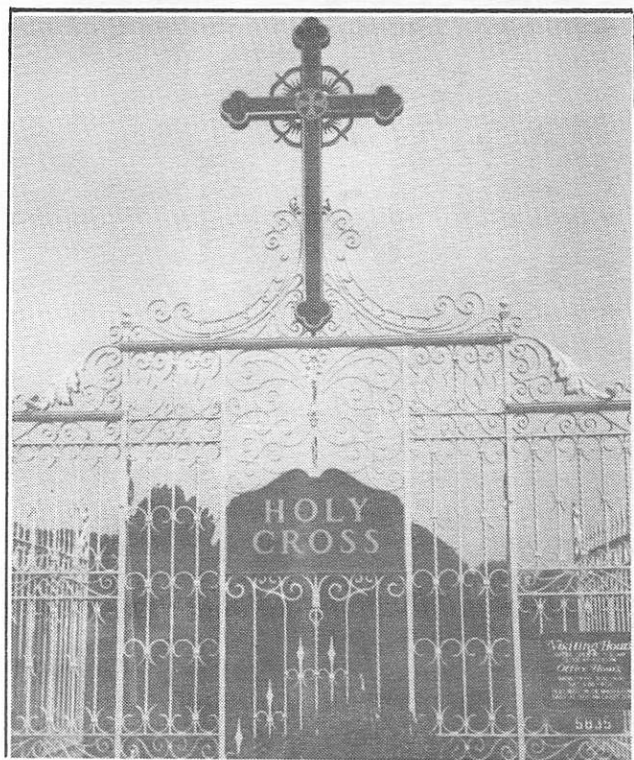
Dixie Lee's Grave



Bing's Mother's Grave



Bing's Father's Grave



Holy Cross Cemetery Gates



A View of the Grotto Area



PARAMOUNT THEATRE BUILDING. NEW YORK. PHOTO-PARAMOUNT
FAMOUS LASKY CORP.

RADIO'S NEW SENSATION
BING CROSBY
Romantic singer of songs you love

ON THE STAGE
 AT THE

NEW YORK TIMES SQUARE
Paramount
 BY MARK SCRIMGER



N.Y. TIMES PHOTOPLAYS. 22 NOV 1931

NEW YORK TIMES SQUARE and BROOKLYN PLAZA 4th FLOOR

Paramount

"The best picture the Paramount Has Housed This Season" — Mirror.

"TOUCHDOWN!"

A Paramount Picture
 Written by Francis Wallace Smith

Richard ARLEN Peggy SHANNON
 REGIS TOOMEY JACK OAKIE

"Audience burst into applause right thru the picture!" — News
 "Thrilling story, good acting!" — Journal

ON THE STAGE

NEW YORK Radio's New Sensation
BING CROSBY
 THE MILLS BROS. HARRIET HOCTOR ARMIDA
 Rubinoff • Crawfords

BROOKLYN Singing Your Favorites!
KATE SMITH
 The Songbird of the South
IN PERSON!
 BUSTER WEST TOM LILLIS

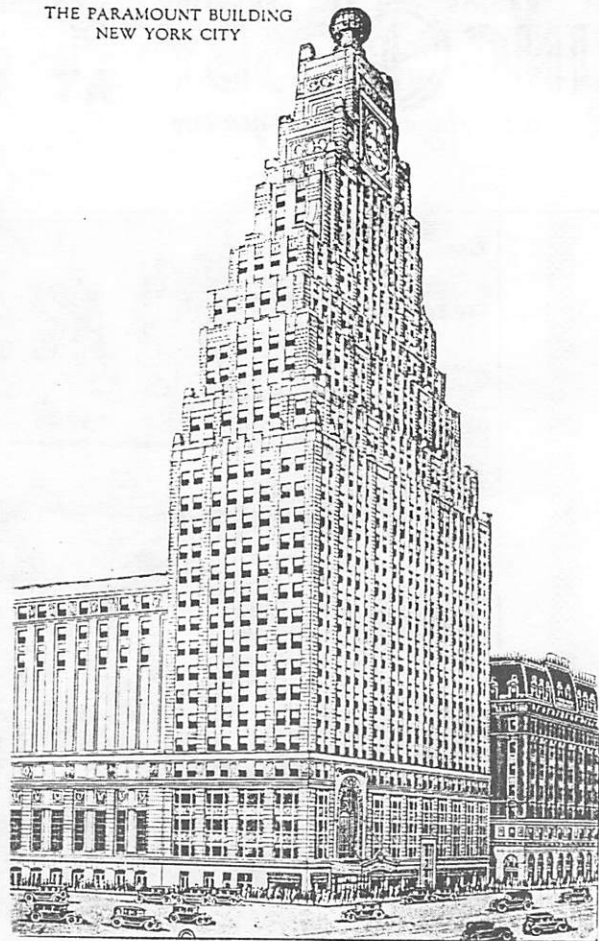


An ad and the theatre marquee from Bing's 2nd week on stage at the New York Paramount in 1931. The photo on the right was taken backstage during his engagement there. The New York Times ad is courtesy of Jean-Paul Fréreault.



This is Times Square which is the heart of New York's theatrical district with the New York Times Building marking the division of 7th Ave. from Broadway. Within the radius of 10 blocks are scores of theatres. The tall building with clock houses the Paramount Theatre, one of the leading motion picture palaces. Next to it is the Hotel Astor.

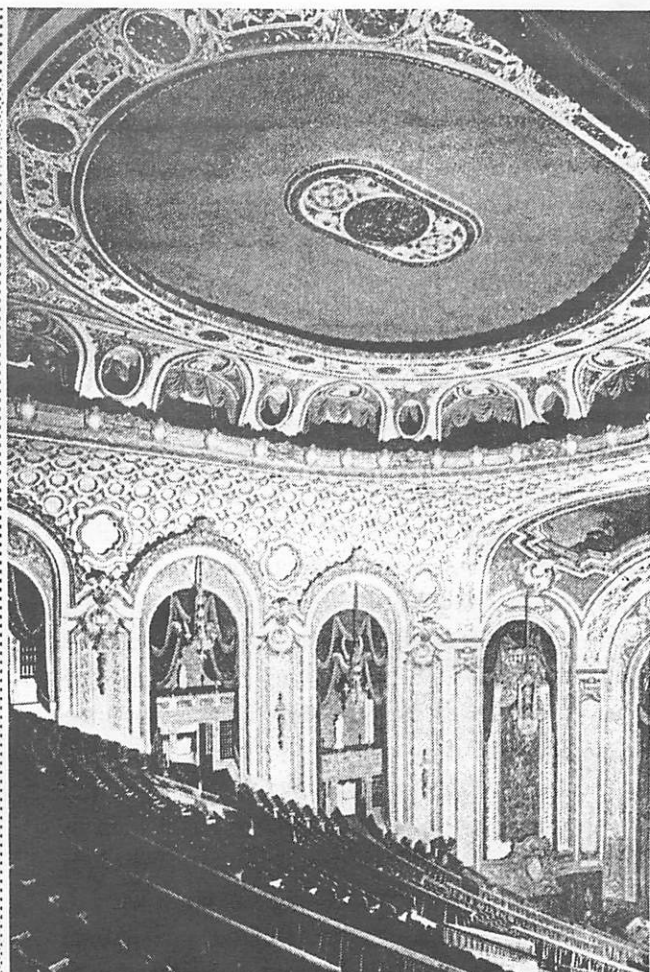
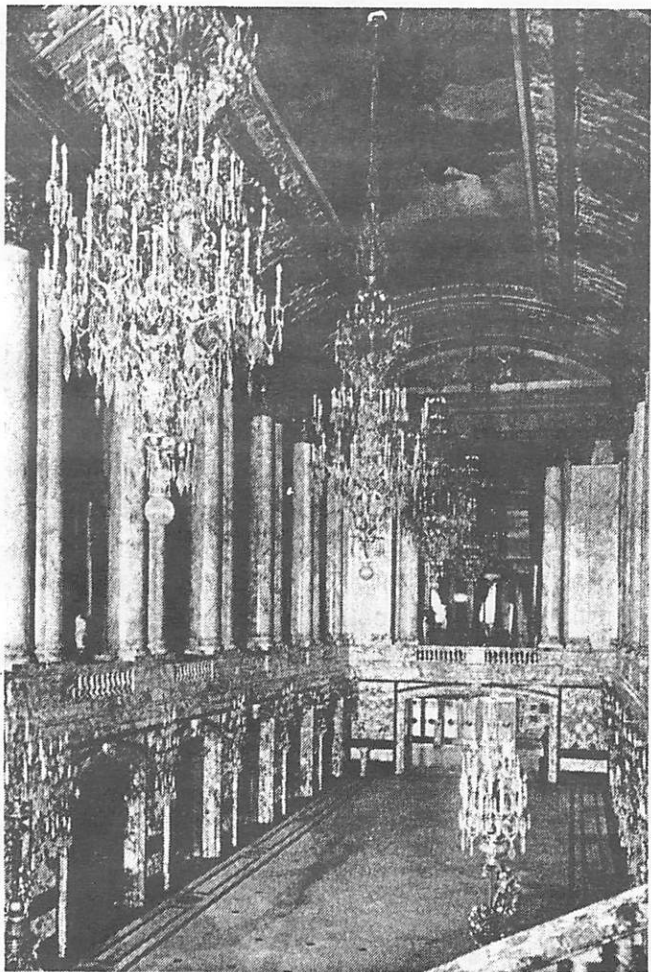
THE PARAMOUNT BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY



THE PARAMOUNT BUILDING and Paramount Theatre, located at Times Sq. between 43rd St. and 44th St. at the crossroads of the world. It rises to a height of 35 stories. The theatre seats 4,000 and is directly to the rear of the main structure. One of the novel features of the building is a Hall of Nations, in which is set stones from famous and historical buildings all over the world.



TIMES SQUARE looking north with the PARAMOUNT BUILDING facade and theatre marquee on the left.



Lobby and auditorium of the Paramount in New York City in the early 1930's



■ Paramount
Times Square
New York City
Rapp and Rapp
1926-64

From GREAT AMERICAN MOVIE
THEATERS, by David Naylor

Rapp and Rapp designed the Times Square Paramount in the base of the quasi-Deco building built to house the Paramount corporate offices. Turning to the French style that had worked so well for them previously, the architects created a luxurious theater that at some 4,000 seats managed to enfold the audience with the stage productions through careful and expensive staging and lighting effects.

A stained-glass "Mount Paramount" medallion was the focal point of a two-story window in the base of the Paramount Building. An ornate, curved French marquee of modest scale protected the box office and front doors. A black marble rotunda preceded a low Hall of Nations with large display cases of stones from famous buildings of the world. The half-block-long lobby that came next terminated in a graceful staircase inspired by the Paris Opera. Each foyer had a distinctive design, custom Aubusson carpeting and enough statuary and antiques to furnish a museum. The somewhat narrow auditorium was surrounded by an arcade of cove-lighted arches on the main and mezzanine floors and covered by a rectangular dome with overlooks from an encircling lounge above.

This theater did not manage to survive far into the 1960s, despite the corporate wizards in adjoining offices. Altered many times to accommodate swings of taste, the Paramount disappeared relatively quietly in the pre-preservation early 1960s. The skyscraper, still a notable structure at 43rd Street and Broadway, remains sans theater.

Although nothing could ever replace the thrilling experience of actually being in the audience during one of Bing's early performances at the Paramount, Bing's friend and co-star, Jack Oakie, and Mr. Crosby himself both remembered moments from that engagement when they wrote their autobiographies.

Jack Oakie:

The use of long silences and three words is a Bing Crosby delivery I saw started over forty-five years ago backstage at the New York Paramount Theatre. I was standing in the wings with Dixie the night Bing stumbled into that three-word delivery. Bing was singing the number "I Surrender Dear" to Harriett Hoctor's toe ballet routine. The stage was set up for her like a steeplechase racetrack, with hurdles for her to leap over, and the property men hid Bing's microphones on the posts of the hurdles. Bing started at the first hurdle and sang into the mike, "We played a game," then in silence walked to the next hurdle and hit his marks in front of the mike before singing the next three words, "of stay away." Again he walked silently on to the third hurdle and mike before going into, "But it cost more"; silence again until he got to the fourth hurdle and sang into the mike, "than I can pay." Bing went from hurdle to hurdle and back again singing three-word phrases until he got to the finish, "without you--I can't--make my way--I surrender dear."

From *Jack Oakie's Double Takes*

Bing Crosby:

AT THE PARAMOUNT

The Paramount used me as a master of ceremonies. I sang a song or two, worked in some of the specialty acts, or did straight for visiting comics. Being an emcee turned out to be rather a merry assignment. I found I could be quite the gabby fellow. Often, I came up with *le bon mot* or *le mot juste*, as the case required. Probably something I'd lifted, but it may have been due to the fact that in college and high school I'd been fascinated with words and their meanings. I'd discovered that there was a book called a Thesaurus, and I'd carried it around with me. I'd

not only look up word meanings, but their antonyms and synonyms.

Since my 1932 engagement at the Paramount lasted twenty-nine weeks, they strove to devise something spectacular every week in the way of a production number. One week they had me perched on a giant crane. The machinery for the crane was in the pit, and when the mechanism reached for me on the stage, I climbed into the seat. The crane swung me out over the heads of the audience with a spot focused on me, dangling in space, and I sang my song which was probably something suitable like "Penthouse Serenade."

I did this crane number on New Year's Eve when the place was full of drunks and sailors. As the crane swooped low, the sailors reached up, held it and took off my shoes and socks. They were working on my pants when the crane operator switched on enough power to bring me back to the stage, where I finished my song in my bare feet, clutching my belt. It was a big smash, but the rest of the week I imposed a fifty-foot ceiling on the boys back stage.

From *Call Me Lucky*



Sailors reached up and took off my shoes and socks.

The fate of the Paramount Theatres which figured so prominently in Bing's early success is outlined in a wonderful book entitled *"The Movie Lover's Guide to New York"* by Richard Allenman.

PARAMOUNT BUILDING 1501 Broadway

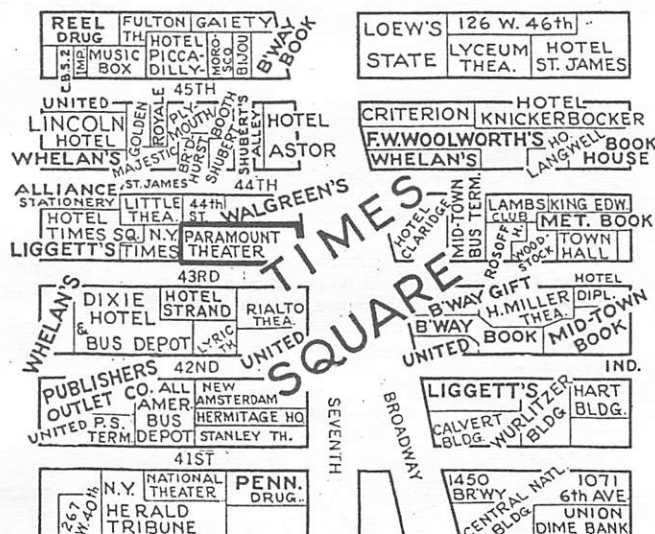
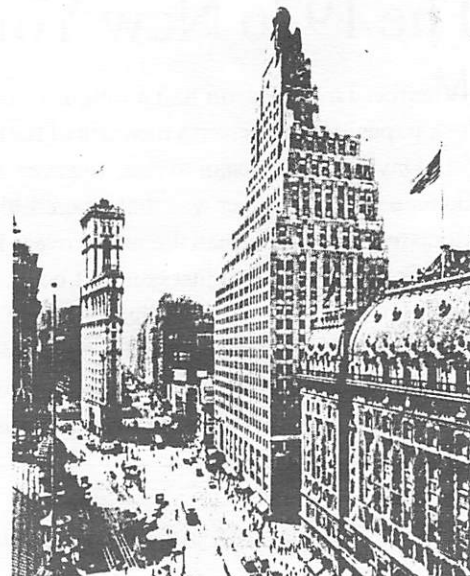
Known simply as 1501 Broadway these days, this thirty-five-story Times Square pyramid crowned by a Deco clock tower and a gigantic glass globe is actually one of the greatest monuments to early moviemaking still standing in Manhattan. Erected in 1926, 1501 Broadway made its debut as the Paramount Building, the man behind it being Paramount Pictures' Adolph Zukor, the mogul who founded the Famous Players Company back in 1912 and then went on to head one of the world's most powerful studios.

The dramatic mountain of a building that Zukor erected for his company on Times Square not only housed Paramount offices, but was also home to the glorious Paramount Theater. Designed by architects Rapp and Rapp, the Paramount had three lobbies, including a Great Hall punctuated at one end by an extraordinary marble staircase modeled after the one at the Paris Opéra, plus a myriad of special public rooms that ranged from a tea gallery to a ladies' smoking lounge to a music room where a string orchestra played chamber music for customers waiting for seats. To keep track of the theater's 3,900 seats, 150 ushers had a special electronic signal system that told of vacancies in the vast auditorium.

Throughout the years, the Paramount became just as famous for the headliners that studded its live stage shows as for the movies it presented.

The Paramount bit the dust in the 1950s. Hollowed out rather than knocked down, the space that the theater took up in the Paramount Building was then "filled in" with offices. Today, all that remains of the legendary Paramount Theater is the building that Adolph Zukor built on top of it. Movie lovers can still get a glimpse of 1920s movie magic by stepping inside the sleek black-marble lobby of 1501 Broadway. Especially eye-grabbing are the bronze elevator doors and the gilded light fixtures. From the beauty of this lobby, one can imagine just how splendid the old Paramount Theater must have been.

Times Square
trilogy (left
to right):
Times Building,
Paramount Build-
ing, and Astor
Hotel, ca. 1930



PARAMOUNT THEATER SITE 385 Flatbush Avenue Extension

The sweeping marquee that once wrapped around Flatbush and DeKalb Avenues is gone, as are the two nine-story-high neon signs that told all of Brooklyn that this was the fabled Paramount Theater. With 4,126 seats, the Brooklyn Paramount reigned as the borough's biggest movie palace from 1928—when it opened with Nancy Carroll starring in *Manhattan Cocktail*—to 1962, when its last picture show was *Hatari* with John Wayne. Designed by Rapp and Rapp, the architectural firm responsible for the Paramount Theater on Times Square, the Brooklyn Paramount was just as famous for its Paramount-Publix stage shows as for its films. Early in the theater's history, a chorus girl named Ginger Rogers leapt successfully from the Paramount stage-show circuit to Broadway and eventually to the Paramount Studios in Astoria.

By the time the 1950s rolled around, the once-lavish stage shows at the Paramount had given way to rock-and-roll extravaganzas, many hosted by New York D.J.s Alan Freed and Murray the K. By that time, too, Long Island University had acquired the office building that towered over the Paramount, and in 1962, when the theater shut down permanently, L.I.U. turned the massive auditorium—with its mighty Wurlitzer organ and its star-studded "atmospheric" ceiling—into a gymnasium. It's still that today.



Brooklyn
Paramount
ca. 1930

The 1976 New York City Christmas Tree Lighting

Member David Haron had a unique Crosby experience early in December, 1976. It seems that he was reading a New York paper and ran across a mention of the upcoming City Hall Christmas tree lighting ceremony to be held on December 15th. David's anger began to rise, however, as he read further that some minor celebrity was slated to sing at the occasion. The reason for his anger was that--incredibly--the city government was apparently unaware that the person most closely associated with Christmas the world over--Bing Crosby--was in town at that very moment performing on Broadway at the Uris Theatre. David just couldn't believe that they had missed extending an invitation to such an obvious choice for this honor. He resolved to enlighten City Hall by calling them and pointing out the error of their ways. He was most successful, as the letter and picture below clearly illustrate. As a reward for his suggestion, David was able to attend the ceremony in the company of the Assistant to the Mayor, Arlene Wolff, who afterward thanked him on behalf of the City of New York with this letter. Many thanks to David for supplying this material for us to share with the entire membership.

M. S.



OFFICE OF SPECIAL EVENTS
42 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10004
Telephone: 566-2950
ARLENE WOLFF
Assistant to the Mayor

December 22, 1976

Mr. David N. Haron
Swissair
608 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10020

Dear Mr. Haron:

I am happy to acknowledge the role you played in having Bing Crosby sing "White Christmas" at the City Hall tree-lighting ceremony on December 15th.

The original suggestion was indeed yours, and we thank you for it.

With best wishes for the holiday season.

Cordially,

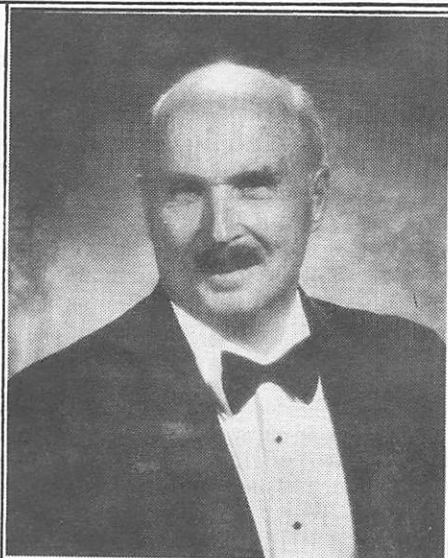
Arlene Wolff
Arlene Wolff

PLAYBILL

URIS THEATRE



ON
BROADWAY



DAVID HARON



As Mayor Beame lit New York's official Christmas tree, Bing sang "White Christmas" in December 1976.

Bing, Inc.

America's No. 1 star, Bing Crosby, has won more fans, made more money than any other entertainer in history. Today he is a kind of national institution.

BY LINCOLN BARNETT

Member Charles Baillie found this very flattering article about Bing in a June 1945 issue of LIFE. Although the type has been reset by our computer, no editorial changes have been made. Pictures in the original article have not been reprinted here.

When Bing Crosby walks into the NBC studios in Hollywood to rehearse his weekly radio program, he usually looks as if he had just holed out on the 18th green and had by-passed the locker room on his way to work. No necktie is ever in evidence. His sport shirt airily overhangs his slacks. His brown felt hat relaxes on the back of his head. He is likely to be chewing gum and smoking a charred and potent pipe, caked black with primordial ash.

Downstage, opposite the orchestra, he perches himself on a high bookkeeper's stool beside a microphone. While waiting for his cue he hums or whistles contemplatively. From time to time he removes a pencil from behind his ear, takes an interlocking grip on it and swings it like a mashie. He wisecracks a good deal with musicians and sound engineers. If somebody asks the piano for an A, Crosby may wait until several instruments start tuning and then loudly volunteer an A flat, a B flat or a Bronx cheer. When the time comes for him to sing, he shifts his gum into one cheek, clamps his pipe between his rear molars and effortlessly exudes the velvety, faultlessly enunciated baritone phrases that have made him the best-liked and best-paid entertainer in the world.

The air of imperturbable composure which Crosby wears at all times in public and in private, stems from the inner relaxation of a completely successful man. No performer in history has ever achieved such ascendancy in so many media of expression. His films brought more money into motion-picture offices last year than those of any other star. He topped all polls of radio listeners as the most popular singer on the air. His recordings have outsold all others by overwhelming margins for the last ten years. His songs are heard daily in canned concerts and short-wave broadcasts, in juke joints and private homes around the earth. Sailors in the Pacific and soldiers in Europe have come to regard his voice as the voice of home. Today Crosby transcends his profession. He has become, like Will Rogers a decade ago, a kind of national institution.

In awarding its 1944 Oscar to Crosby for his portrayal of the young priest in *Going My Way* the Motion Picture Academy bestowed artistic recogni-

tion upon talents which had long been impressively acclaimed in dollars and cents. Computed financially, Crosby's artistry is stupendous. He is not only the No. 1 money-maker in Hollywood, he is one of the great money-makers of all time. His contract with Paramount calls for a maximum of three pictures a year at \$150,000 apiece. His weekly radio broadcasts net him \$7,500 for each half hour's work. The Decca Record Co. pays him royalties of about 2 1/2 cents a disc (the amount varies with the price of the record), and this last year totaled \$250,000. From three sources alone Crosby thus derives an annual gross of more than \$1,000,000.

Over and above his wages and royalties Crosby receives income from assorted financial interests which approximate in diversity those of Henry J. Kaiser. He owns real estate - including the Crosby Building on Sunset Boulevard - throughout Los Angeles. He has a 10,000-acre cattle ranch in Nevada and is part owner of another in the Argentine. He breeds and sells race horses. He is president and chief stockholder of the Del Mar Turf Club, whose \$500,000 plant is now serving as an aircraft factory turning out wing-rib assemblies ("Bing's Wings") for Flying Fortresses. A few months ago he organized Bing Crosby Productions, Inc., and in his initial effort as a producer begot *The Great John L.* which is currently doing very nicely in theaters around the country. Crosby also has an interest in several music-publishing firms. At various times he has owned a baseball team and hunks of several prize fighters. His stocks, bonds and other securities are held by the Crosby Investment Corp., income from which goes mostly to his four sons. Discussing Crosby's earnings, his friend Bob Hope declared recently, "Bing doesn't even pay income tax any more. He just asks the government what they need."

Where some individuals clamber for success and wind up with ulcers, Crosby tends to belittle his lucrative abilities as mere genetic accidents that have been considerably overrated by the public. He does not, for example, consider himself either a very good actor or a very notable singer. In pictures he strives for little more than a natural projection of his his own amiable personality. Convinced that he is no glamour kid, he long ago ceased to worry about his thinning hair and nonretractable ears. He never wears a scalp doily off the screen. Recognizing that at 41 he is inclined to be chubby, he does not complain when Bob Hope refers to him as the "little

round man that sings" or calls attention to a new Crosby shirt by sneering, "That's the first time I ever saw a ball turret with a slip cover." Crosby is equally casual about his singing. He signs letters "The Groaner" and in discussing a scheduled appearance he will apologetically agree to "get up and sing at 'em" or "toss 'em a few songs." When a friend warned him recently that his voice might ultimately be injured by his incessant pipe smoking, Crosby grunted indifferently. "Oh, the kinda singing I do, you can't hurt your voice."

Crosby's lack of vanity is not, as some Hollywood cynics suppose, a kind of inverted affectation. He has always been surprised by the good things that came his way. His mother had to drag him, one time when he was a boy, to a swimming meet from which he emerged with 11 medals. His brother Everett had to bludgeon him into trying for his first radio contract. His friend Jack Kapp, president of the Decca Record Co., has to badger him every time he wants him to accept any new type of song. When Kapp asked him to make *Silent Night*, Crosby retorted, "What do you think I am, Lily Pons?" Kapp got his recording in the end by cagily suggesting that Bing turn over his royalties to charity, and to date some three dozen charitable agencies have benefited through the sale of more than 1,500,000 impressions. Although it is now manifest that almost everybody likes almost everything he does, Crosby remains unconvinced. Inherently easy-going, he has an acute horror of pretension. He shies away from publicity, grows taciturn in the presence of strangers and offers the world a mask of languid insouciance. He submerges his very considerable intellectual endowments beneath a welter of athletic enthusiasms. Although he reads a great deal, no one ever sees him with a book. And although he likes to deny all knowledge of classical music, he is often caught whistling phrases from operas and symphonies he insists he never heard.

On occasion Crosby's supreme nonchalance exasperates his friends. One afternoon two years ago his 20-room colonial house in North Hollywood caught fire and burned down. After much telephoning, his lyricist and good friend, Johnny Burke, located Bing at the Brown Derby, as he was sitting down to dinner after a golf match. "Listen Bing," Burke sputtered into the phone, "before I say anything I want you to know that Dixie and the kids are okay." Bing said, "Isn't that nice, Johnny? And how's your family?" "Listen to me, Bing" Burke said, speaking very distinctly. "Your house burned down." Crosby yawned the contented yawn of a man who had shot a 74. "Oh that old thing," he drawled. "Did they save my tuxedo?" Despairingly, Burke shouted, "On the level, Bing, honest, your house burned down this afternoon. You'd better hurry out here right away." Bing hesitated. "But I just ordered my dinner," he complained. Burke thought Crosby was kidding again. But he wasn't. Having accepted the

fact that his house was destroyed and his family safe, he saw no reason to forego dinner in order to view a pile of embers. After eating he drove out and surveyed the smoking remains. He poked around amid the ashes until he spied one of his shoes, charred but not consumed. Inside it, untouched by the flames, he found what he was looking for - \$1,500 in small bills which he had hidden there for use at the race track next day. Nothing else was saved.

Although Crosby has received critical accolades as a comedian and, since *Going My Way*, as a dramatic actor, his prime professional asset is his extraordinarily agreeable, caressing, friendly, lyrical voice. The universality of its appeal lies in the fact it is a completely natural voice. Dinah Shore once perceptively observed, "Bing sings like all people think they sing in the shower." Crosby cannot properly be termed a crooner. For although he has in the past been guilty of an occasional tearful "buh-buh-buh-boo" - an improvisation inspired one night by his sudden inability to recall the lyrics of a song - his style has matured and mellowed with the years. His singing today is the limpid, effortless minstrelsy of a troubadour. He likes to sing. He sings while shaving, while driving a car and in every unoccupied moment of his waking hours. He never thinks about breathing, intonation or diaphragmatic control. As a boy he took two or three voice lessons but gave them up when the baseball season began. He can read a score only insofar as he can see that the notes go up or down. But his sense of rhythm never falters and his ear is so faithful that many an opera singer has publicly praised his ability to stay unerringly on pitch. The quickness of his ear astonishes musical associates. Several months ago Deccas asked him to record *Don't Fence Me In*. Crosby had never heard the song before he walked into the studio and was handed a complicated score which tossed parts back and forth between him and the Andrews Sisters. Crosby ran over the arrangement a few times. Precisely one half hour after his arrival, the master record was cut.

He is the No. 1 song plug on the air

Although he began his musical career as a scat singer, Crosby has established himself in the last decade as the most versatile of popular vocalists. His recordings include cowboy songs, Hawaiian songs, Irish songs, patriotic numbers, Victor Herbert arias, modern blues, old-fashioned sentimental ballads and hymns. To all of them he imparts a simple dignity and depth of feeling which once moved a friend of his to remark that Crosby sings every song as though it were the best song ever written. Many of his nonjazz recordings sell with the year-to-year regularity of classics. In all, 60,000,000 Crosby disks have been marketed since he made his first record in 1931. His biggest best seller is

White Christmas, 2,000,000 impressions of which have been sold in the U. S. and 250,000 in Great Britain.

It is through his weekly broadcast that Crosby exerts his greatest influence on U. S. musical taste. He is, in the idiom of sheetmusic publishers, "the No. 1 song plug on the air." When he enters the NBC building each Thursday morning for rehearsal, a half hundred "music contact men" or "song pluggers" descend on him and thrust copies of new songs into his hand with exhortations to include them in his next program. Nine out of ten singers and bandleaders listen to Crosby's broadcasts each Thursday night and follow his lead. The day after he sings a song over the air - any song - some 50,000 copies of it are sold throughout the U.S. A few years ago Crosby's eldest son Gary conceived a liking for an obscure number called *Little Sir Echo* and pestered Bing until he consented to broadcast it. No one was more surprised than the publisher when *Little Sir Echo* suddenly soared to the top of the *Hit Parade*. Time and again Crosby has taken some new or unknown ballad, has given it what is known in trade circles as the "big goose" and made it a hit singlehanded and overnight.

It is often difficult for Crosby's oldest friends to relate his current eminence with his irresponsible and hedonistic past. The voice which has been heard by more people than any other in history sounded its first note 41 years ago in Tacoma, Wash. Bing was the fourth of seven children born to Harry L. and Kate Harrigan Crosby II. His mother's family came from County Mayo, Ireland. His paternal ancestors were New England seamen. Captain Nathaniel Crosby II, his great-grandfather, for whom a Liberty ship has been named, helped found the city of Portland, Ore. When Harry Lillis Crosby Jr. (i.e., Bing) was 5 years old, his parents moved to Spokane, where his father obtained a job as bookkeeper for a brewery. There the seven Crosby children grew up, the five boys going in turn to Gonzaga University, a Jesuit school, and the two girls to a local convent. Bing, who acquired his nickname from his addiction to a now extinct comic strip called *The Bingville Bugle*, was an apt but less than assiduous student. Most of the Crosby children had some musical talent. But Bing was the inveterate songster and *siffleur*. He could be heard coming blocks away.

He'd rather sing than study law or eat

Though his mother had hoped he would enter the priesthood, Bing made up his mind to study for the bar. Mornings he attended law classes at Gonzaga. Afternoons he worked in a law office. Evenings he played the drums and sang with a six-piece band organized by his friend and classmate, Al Rinker. Crosby's handling of the drumsticks was, like his singing, purely instinctive. He never did learn to execute a roll. One evening he discovered for the

first time how some men feel about other men who sing. Rinker's band was playing at a dance hall. Bing was singing *Peggy O'Neill* when a slick-haired young fellow danced past and called "Hi, Pansy." Enraged, Crosby jumped from the platform when the song ended and seized his reviler by the elbow. "Right this way, Elmer," he muttered and led him out the side door. "If you've got any funny remarks to make," he said, "now's the time." The slick-haired youth said, "Okay, sister, run along home to mother." Bing swung a left, a right, and another right, and the fight was over. Leaving his opponent where he lay, Crosby stalked back to his drums.

At the outset of his second year at law school Crosby realized he would never be a happy barrister. Melodies rang in his ear constantly and often during class he found himself whistling under his breath and drumming with pencils on his desk. And he would sneak away from his law office to a music shop and spend hours listening to records by Paul Whiteman and Waring's Pennsylvanians. One day he told his mother he was determined to discontinue his law studies. "Oh, I can get fair marks and maybe make the bar," he said, "but I just think music all day. I'd rather sing than eat." A few days later he and Al Rinker bought an ancient Ford for \$40 and hit the road. Together they evolved a routine of hot fast numbers with Rinker at the piano supplying tenor to Bing's melody. In Tacoma they made \$30 in a week's run at a motion-picture house. In Portland and San Francisco they worked the speakeasies. Bouncing along in their Ford one morning, Crosby began singing *I Never Knew I Could Love Anybody*. Unconsciously he modulated his tempo to the stutter of the jalopy's exhaust. Then suddenly he was no longer singing words; he was imitating the sound of the exhaust and syncopating the melody with "Wah-ta-do-dee-do-dee-do." As Rinker came in with him, Crosby took a cymbal and emphasized the breaks with light crashes. "Say, that's a good lick," Rinker exclaimed at the end of the song. In that moment the idiom of Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys was conceived.

Crosby and Rinker toured West Coast circuits for a year before Whiteman chanced to cross their trail. He was impressed the first time he heard them perform and asked them to join his retinue. Under Whiteman's aegis Crosby and Rinker saw most of the U.S. Although Midwestern cities greeted their act with enthusiasm, New York City audiences proved unexpectedly frigid, and it was not until Whiteman added a third man to the team - Harry Barris, who later composed *I Surrender Dear* and other Crosby specialties - that the Rhythm Boys came into their own. Barris and Rinker played white baby pianos. Crosby stood between them riffing his cymbal with a drumstick. At the end of an especially hot lick Barris would leap from his piano stool and slam the lid of his piano in ecstasy. Today **33**

recordings of their best-known numbers - *Mississippi Mud*, *My Suppressed Desire*, *From Monday On*, *Bluebirds and Blackbirds* and *Rhythm King* - are regarded as collectors' items among antiquarians of jazz.

When Whiteman took his orchestra to England in the fall of 1929 he decided the Rhythm Boys were too esoteric for British ears and farmed them out to the Keith-Albee circuit for a vaudeville tour. Out from under his avuncular eye they enjoyed a strenuous social life. When an interviewer in one city asked Crosby if it were true he had left a "trail of broken hearts" across the country, he replied, "No, a trail of broken bottles." One night they took a train in the wrong direction and completely missed a three-day booking - a heinous offense for which they nearly got fired from the circuit. Another time Crosby lost all their expense money in a crap game; as a result the Rhythm Boys were unable to pay express charges on their baggage and had to perform next day without their pianos, properties, scenery or costumes. Their most humiliating moment came in Toledo when an angry theater manager cut them off in the middle of their act. Fancying themselves comics, they had begun to interpolate a good many wisecracks at the expense of their musical numbers. The Toledo manager, forewarned that the Rhythm Boys' ad-libbing was strictly Joe Miller, asked them to confine themselves to singing in his theater. They agreed, but that night before a packed house temptation became too great. "Say, Harry," Crosby called to Barris between songs, "do you know how to cure a horse from frothing at the mouth?" "Why no, Bing," Barris responded, "how do you cure a horse from frothing at the mouth?" "Well, Harry, you teaches 'em to spit." Wham! The outraged manager rang the curtain down right in their faces.

He gets 30 days in jail

Whiteman forgave the Rhythm Boys their misdeeds and on his return took them along to Hollywood to help make *The King of Jazz*. Crosby was elated to learn that in addition to his numbers with Barris and Rinker he had been selected to sing a solo. Unfortunately for his movie career he got involved in an automobile accident while driving home from a studio party celebrating completion of the first week's work on the picture. Advised to plead guilty and pay his fine, he showed up in traffic court with \$50 in his pocket. He was fresh from the golf links and had on green knickers, an orange sweater and checked socks. The judge surveyed him coldly. "The arresting officer reports that you had been drinking. Is that true?" he asked. "Quite," Bing replied blandly. "Are you familiar with the 18th Amendment?" asked the judge. "Only remotely," said Bing. The judge said, "Well, you'll have 30 days to familiarize yourself with it."

spring Crosby, the judge refused to mitigate his sentence by so much as an hour. Bing served his full 30 days. Meanwhile production on the picture moved relentlessly forward and the solo scheduled for him went to another baritone.

The Rhythm Boys parted company with Whiteman when he headed back east after completion of *The King of Jazz* and signed up with Gus Arnheim's orchestra at the Cocoanut Grove in Los Angeles. By this time Crosby had begun to sing solos "with a cry in them," and his individuality was emerging from the collective identity of the trio. But whenever his brother Everett urged him to go to New York and promote himself as a single performer on the radio, Bing would reply, "Baloney, I'm just another baritone with a gravel throat." One day Everett mailed Bing's recording of *I Surrender Dear* to two national networks. Back came letters inviting Crosby to come east and talk business. In the end he signed up with CBS for \$600 a week. Before his program went on the air, however, a characteristic Crosby mishap supervened. He played golf in the rain and as a result lost his voice on the very day of his radio debut. The network apologized for the nonappearance of its new baritone three nights in a row, while Bing fretted in enforced silence. On the fourth day Everett found a note in his room saying, "Cancel all contracts. It's no go. Bing." After a frantic search Everett located his despondent brother, exhorted, cajoled and insulted him, called him "yellow" and asked him what his mother would think. Reluctantly Bing agreed to try again. He taxied to the studio and after a brief rehearsal went on the air. Knees wobbling, sweat beading his forehead, he delivered his numbers without a dissonant note.

National popularity came to Crosby almost overnight. Fan letters and telegrams poured into the studio. Theaters and nightclubs bid for him. He played 20 consecutive weeks at the Paramount Theater in Times Square. Hollywood summoned him back west to appear in *The Big Broadcast*. Then came other pictures, *College Humor*, *Too Much Harmony* and *Going Hollywood*. His fan mail soared to 5,000 to 7,500 a month. In 1933, after but one year in motion pictures, a national poll of theater operators placed Crosby among the top ten box-office draws on the screen.

He attains intellectual maturity

Sudden success is not an uncommon phenomenon in the realm of entertainment. The notable aspect of Crosby's success is that it has persisted and enlarged with the passage of time. It has been paralleled, moreover, by his marked intellectual growth. The Crosby of 1945 is spiritually an altogether different individual from the volatile Rhythm Boy of 1931. Still ostensibly indolent and unambitious, he has become a conscientious practitioner of his several callings and an exciting critic of

the material with which he deals. He has possibly done more to elevate the standards of lyric writing than any other singer of popular songs. Sensitive to cliches and endowed with an exceptional command of language, he disdains to sing words which offend his intelligence or taste. His radio scripts, which he heavily edits and revises, are faithful reflections of his own conversational and epistolary style. The Crosby lingo is highly alliterative and characterized by wild mixtures of pedantic polysyllables and current slang. For example he apostrophizes Bob Hope, whose most obvious facial ornament is his retrousse nose, as "hook-horn," "shoe face," "bent-beak," "scow-prow," "ski-snoot" and "funnel-flue." To Crosby skis are "society slats" and a group of college girls is a "covey of culture-vultures." Instead of employing a trite phrase like "wow the audience" he will say "crumple the folks." In announcing a duet with some fellow performer, he may proclaim, "We will now cross cadenzas." In discussing sports he is likely to employ musical expressions and vice versa. Thus he once introduced Rose Bampton as the "Seabiscuit of the Sopranos" and described his morning round of golf as "slightly largo *con moto*."

Of several factors responsible for Crosby's evolution from a slightly alcoholic cymbal tickler into America's No. 1 showman, the first was his marriage to Dixie Lee (nee Wilma Wyatt of Harriman, Tenn.). At the time of their courtship she appeared headed for an auspicious career as a screen actress and Bing appeared headed for trouble. A studio executive advised Dixie to repudiate Crosby, warning her she would probably have to support him the rest of her life. But she married him anyway at a time when he was nearly penniless and his job at the Cocoanut Grove his only security. Within a year of their wedding his luck changed and with it his temperament. He became Bing Crosby Inc., Ltd., and in due time the father of four sons.

The war put the finishing touches on Crosby's process of growth as an individual. Ever since Pearl Harbor he has tramped tirelessly around the country, entertaining at camps, hospitals and bases, never refusing an Army or Navy request. He has made innumerable shortwave broadcasts and transcriptions for troops overseas. For OWI he has broadcast in German to the Germans, who know him as "Der Bingle." Last summer he went abroad and sang to soldiers in the front lines. No audience was too small or too informal for him. One day he inadvertently jeeped into enemy territory while hunting for a forward outpost where he had promised to sing for ten members of an antiaircraft battery. In London crowds mobbed a restaurant in which he was dining and refused to disperse until he appeared at a window and gave them a *a cappella* rendering of *Pennies from Heaven*. An English newspaper which described the episode remarked, "That evening did more for transatlantic

relationship than a hundred speeches. Thanks, Bing." Such occurrences, the warmth with which GIs unanimously welcomed him, the cordiality of General Eisenhower and other distinguished personages gave Crosby a new perspective on himself. He returned to this country imbued with a kind of sober self-assurance he had never known before.

He has a moat around him

Like most Americans, Crosby dislikes divulging any streak of sentimentality. He is indeed rather more withdrawn than the average and by Hollywood standards looms as a paragon of introversion. Friends who have known him longest confess to knowing him least. "Bing has a moat around him," one of them observed recently. He reveals one facet of his complex personality to one group of associates, another side to others. Thus his horse-racing friends swear that the only thing Crosby really cares about is racing. He convinces others that golf or music is his cardinal interest in life. Anomalously, he is often more outgoing with casual acquaintances than with really close friends. If an old pal turns up after a long absence, Crosby is likely to greet him with a cool "Oh hello, when are you leaving town?" He has been known to spend hours searching through bookstores for a particular volume in which some friend has expressed interest, but when he makes the presentation he will mutter, "Say, some publisher sent me this book. I don't want it. Can you use it?"

Crosby's fellowship with Bob Hope is no script writer's invention. The casual insults that pepper their radio and screen appearances also fly between them on golf links. They call each other "Fatso," "Tallow" and "Dad." But they like to play golf together and regularly appear on each other's programs free of charge. The night Crosby landed in New York from his overseas tour, he and Hope promptly began tossing disparaging banter on a coast-to-coast hookup. Hope asked Crosby if he had gone abroad under the "lend-louse" arrangement and said other bright things that made listeners laugh. But when it was over he was upset. "I've been berating myself," he told Dinah Shore that evening. "I knew how much Bing meant to those kids overseas. And he sounded tired. I should have said something serious. But no, I've got to be a comedian all the time and make jokes. I don't think I'm going to sleep very well tonight."

Crosby is incontestably the No. 1 Big Family Man of Hollywood. He is engulfed in family. Of the nine Crosbys who lived in Spokane all but two have moved to Hollywood. Brother Everett, brother Larry and Pop Crosby now work for Bing. Mother Crosby holds no office in the family corporation, but she meets her sons on equal footing in one phase of their activities. She is the most sedulous horse-race addict of them all. Each morning she reads all the dope sheets and figures her bets for the day. When she arrives at the track she almost always falls heir to hot tips. She promptly discards her planned betting

program, plays the tips and invariably loses. A fervent Catholic, Mrs. Crosby is also an implacable teetotaler. But whenever she reproaches her sons for drinking, they retort, "We drink. You bet on horses. It's all the same in the eyes of the Lord."

Bing has always been a conscientious churchgoer. He quietly donated a new organ to his parish church not long ago. Last Christmas he sang midnight Mass at an Army hospital. Recently he told a friend that his work in *Going My Way* was a "labor of love" and that "only the pressing necessity of income-tax payments permitted the acceptance of money for this task." In his next picture, *The Bells of St. Mary's*, he is once again invested with the role of a priest. Although he still enjoys an occasional highball, Crosby nowadays prefers sports to barroom life. He goes to bed early and arises between 6 and 7 a.m. in order to play golf before going to work. Since few of his friends share his liking for exercise at dawn he plays with caddies. He has won many golf tournaments and might easily be in the top flight of U.S. amateurs if his energies were less dispersed. Crosby is adept at all athletics. During the New York World's Fair he astonished a friend and won a \$100 bet by executing a perfect swan dive from the 50-foot board at the Aquacade. His only notable indulgence is in food. Curiously he seldom eats an evening meal, and when he attends a dinner party he sits politely looking on. If hosts importune him to eat something he may accept a bowl of corn flakes. Breakfast and lunch, however, are gastronomic pinnacles of Crosby's day. His idea of breakfast encompasses orange juice, a stack of pancakes with cream and sugar, a steak smothered in lamb chops and a bowl of oatmeal for dessert.

Crosby generally contrives to spend some time every day with his four sons, whom he calls "The Irishers." They are tough kids but obey implicitly when he raises his voice a half tone. Afternoons he plays baseball with them behind the house. Evenings he likes to tell them odd bedtime stories of his own devising. He will, for example, relate the adventures of Little Red Riding Hood; only in the Crosby version Little Red Riding Hood is a jockey, the wolf is a crooked starter and Grandmother is the racing commissioner. Similarly Goldilocks' Three Bears turn out to be the Notre Dame backfield. Last week the National Father's Day Committee named Crosby No. 1 Screen Father for 1945.

Precisely what the future holds for Crosby neither his family nor his friends can conjecture. He has achieved greater popularity, made more money, attracted vaster audiences than any other entertainer in history. And his star is still in the ascendant. His contract with Decca runs until 1950. His contract with Paramount runs until 1954. Records which he made ten years ago are selling better than ever before. The nation's appetite for Crosby's voice and personality appears insatiable. To soldiers overseas and to foreigners he has become a kind of symbol of

land. Crosby, however, seldom bothers to contemplate his future. For one thing, he enjoys hearing himself sing, and if ever a day should dawn when the public wearies of him, he will complacently go right on singing - to himself.

A Letter from Alan Fisher

Priscilla Koernig recently received this letter from Alan Fisher, the Crosby family's butler at the time of Bing's death.

My Dear Priscilla--

Lovely hearing from you. Bob [Pasch] and his wife were sweet! charming couple. Thrilled he rang you and gave you our address. Hawaii was one place Norma and I never ever got to. We always assumed "Oh, it's very near. We can always pop over." Well it *was* comparatively near and we never "popped" over--so annoying really. Well, Priscilla, you did it for us!

Nathaniel has a little boy, Nathaniel Patrick--When I say beautiful I truly mean it--smiling, cooing, adorable nature. Everyone was at the tournament--Harry, Nathaniel, Mary Frances. Heartbreaking to think it is not still in Pebble Beach--oh well.

Please give my love to Patricia Sullivan if you ever call her--*please*.

You have so many "evergreen" memories of Mr. Crosby, memories many people would love to have had. Priscilla, where have all those years gone since he passed away?

"Somewhere" I have an adorable short poem on B.C.--*touching*. It may take me some time to "find" it, as usual it's somewhere "safe." You know how fatal *that* remark is!! But you'll have a copy, I promise.

All our fondest love,
Alan and Norma

For the benefit of our newer members, who may not know about them, Priscilla Koernig and Patricia Sullivan were in charge of Club Crosby for many years. They retired from their posts in 1979, giving way to Al Sutton, Morton Miller, and Herbert Bootman. Your current president and vice-president/editor came on the scene in 1987.



EDDIE LANG

and The Beginnings of Jazz Guitar
By Doug Caldwell

Let's say it's 1924. You're a young aspiring musician, heavily into that new raucous music called "jazz" (much to your parents' dismay). You've just bought a new batch of 78's and plopped yourself down in front of the Victrola. Suddenly the weirdest thing you've ever heard—instead of a banjo clunking along in the background, or a piano laying the harmonic backdrop, these guys are using GUITAR! You've heard guitars before, maybe in mandolin orchestras, or on hillbilly or Hawaiian records, but not very often, and you've *never* heard a guitar in jazz! But this guy is all over the place, using rich harmonic chords and a driving shuffle-strum, playing blues runs and arpeggios and generally taking charge of the whole accompaniment. You've just been hit by Eddie Lang. You and the instrument will never be the same.



Eddie Lang's real name was Salvatore Massaro (he took "Eddie Lang" as a stage name from a childhood sports hero). He was born in Philadelphia in 1902, the son of a fretted-instrument maker from Naples. Lang's father had a taste for classical music and started his son early, most likely on solfeggio (sight singing), as was the Italian way, and then started him on violin at the age of seven.

It was a common thing at that time in Italian families to play more than one instrument, and as the young Salvatore showed promise in school orchestras, his father made him a scaled-down guitar to supplement his violin. This was somewhere around the age of nine, and though he might have been helped initially by his father, acquiring an appetite for classical music through him, it is generally agreed that Lang was self-taught on guitar.

It was while playing violin in the school orchestras that Lang struck up what would become a life-long friendship with the legendary jazz violinist Joe Venuti (who, as the first "hot" jazz violinist, was a bona fide pioneer in his own right). Venuti was being groomed as a classical violinist, and was already an extremely skilled young musician. The two developed a remarkably compatible musical relationship and a

strong friendship based on their similar likes in music and a mutual respect for each other's talent. Somewhere around 1918, Venuti and Lang began playing together in a local cafe trio. It is here that they began working out a repertoire of duets, with Lang on guitar, playing classics, semi-classics, arias, and Italian dance tunes. In their off hours, as a duo, they would entertain in the neighborhood. These duets were the prototypes for the classic guitar-violin stylings that, in later years, would become the Venuti-Lang trademark. As Venuti recalled (in *Jazz Masters of the Twenties* by Richard Hadlock, Collier Books, 1974): "We used to play a lot of mazurkas and polkas. Just for fun, we started to play them in $\frac{3}{4}$. I guess we just liked the rhythm of the guitar.

Then we started to slip in some improvised passages. I'd slip in something, Eddie would pick it up with a variation. Then I'd come back with a variation. We'd just sit there and knock each other out."

For his first real professional job, though, Lang was still playing violin. He joined Venuti playing with Bert Estlow's dance band at the L'Aiglon restaurant in Atlantic City in 1922. Though they never played jazz with Estlow, there are stories of Venuti and Lang jamming on their violin-guitar duets in

the men's room between sets. It's apparent that Lang was quite accomplished on guitar at this time; however, like Lonnie Johnson, he had no notion of there even being an outlet for such playing—except perhaps in the bathroom. These men's room sessions became hot news among musicians, and word of the team of Venuti and Lang began to spread. "We would go into the men's room and play for them there," Venuti is further quoted in *Jazz Masters of the Twenties*. "You could say the first real jazz guitar concerts were played in the men's room of a joint in Atlantic City. Rube Bloom, who recorded with us later, first heard us there. So did Red Nichols, who was scouting around looking for musical talent."

It was during this period that Lang began his permanent transition to guitar. When he returned to Atlantic City for the next summer season (1923), he was with the Charlie Kerr Band. Kerr wanted one of his violinists to switch to banjo, and when Lang mentioned that he had dabbled on the instrument, and offered to give it a try, his career as a violinist came to an end.

Contrary to what was "hot" at the time, Lang apparently was not very fond of the banjo. Though he had grown up at a time when the instrument was extremely popular and had

every opportunity to play it himself, he disliked the banjo's harsh tone, and had obviously made a very conscious choice in concentrating on guitar. Nevertheless, he began playing 4-string banjo with the Kerr band. As things progressed, perhaps because he was more accustomed to the guitar's fretboard, Lang soon switched to banjo-guitar (a banjo body and sound, but with six strings tuned like a guitar). He no doubt was trying to compromise between his familiarity with guitar and the trend at that time for all dance bands to use banjo. However, it wasn't long before he had had enough experimenting, and abandoned all else for the guitar. By 1923 it was his main instrument.

Obviously smitten by the new controversial jazz music, and desiring more of it than their dance band gigs allowed, Venuti and Lang continued to

work on their jazz duet repertoire on the side. In so doing they were not only developing their jazz skills, but inadvertently increasing their future salability as musicians. More than just strummed guitar and melody, these duet efforts allowed both musicians to open up and explore the possibilities of their instruments, especially in context of the jazz elements that were sweeping the country. Venuti worked on his improvising and Lang explored fuller, more elaborate and jazz-oriented accompanying techniques.

There's no doubt that these years of perfecting the duo format—where the pressure is on just two musicians to present a full, diverse and entertaining orchestration—gave Venuti and Lang the strong musical presence for which they were later in so much demand. Red Nichols remembers hearing them play concert music as a duet in an Atlantic City hotel as early as 1923 and,

throughout the winter of '23-'24, they performed and jammed in the Philadelphia area with, among others, the legendary Scranton Sirens—a veritable jazz spawning ground which included the Dorsey Brothers, Russ Morgan, Red Nichols, and others.

In the summer of 1924, once again back in Atlantic City for the summer season, Lang got the break that would launch his career. In casual jam sessions he had sat in with members of the Mound City Blues Blowers (a novelty group consisting of kazoo, paper-and-comb, and banjo), who, despite their scant instrumentation, were riding the wave of several hit records. The Blues Blowers, whose music contained plenty of jazz-like elements and was loosely imitative of the old spasm bands, were so impressed by Lang's guitar playing that he was asked to join the group on their subsequent recordings and publicity appearances. He stayed with them





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for a year, made his first recordings with them, toured England, played the Palace Theater in New York, and ended up back in Atlantic City with them in the summer of 1925. By that time the success of the Blues Blowers was waning, but Lang, through the power of his presence in those first recordings and performances, had established himself—and the guitar—as a force to be reckoned with in jazz.

Lang's recordings with the Blues Blowers in late 1924 and early '25 (while Lonnie Johnson was just beginning his blues competitions) show that his commanding accompaniment style and his grasp of jazz and blues were already strongly established. His clean, driving, four-to-the-bar pulse, his constantly changing and leaping inversions, his sometimes classical, sometimes bluesy passing tones and single-string fills were all very personal and distinct, not to mention unprecedented on the guitar. His playing clearly left the static banjo players in the dust, and almost overnight made them dinosaurs in the jazz field. It wasn't long before banjo players in bands across the country were switching over to guitar, and in effect—thanks to Eddie Lang—the field of jazz guitar was born.

With the advent, in 1925, of electric rather than acoustic (through a horn) recording, the relatively quiet guitar could be more easily recorded. Lang's delicately sculpted accompaniments could now be balanced into any size recording group, and he became a highly sought-after studio accompanist, especially for vocalists, who loved his inventive and solid accompaniment.

Even though he was, at best, a mediocre music reader, Lang was blessed with both perfect pitch and a photographic memory. He could memorize and have an accompaniment ready for any tune after just one run-through. More importantly, with his exceptional ear and recall he was able to learn, assimilate and complement almost any

musical style he was confronted with. In person and on the job Lang was quiet and unassuming, friendly and dependable. He didn't smoke, drank very little, and was very good at anything with his hands, including pickpocketing (which he used as a practical joke on his fellow band members) and billiards (where he often picked up extra cash on his travels from town to town).

Lang's musical style flowered in the increasing number of jazz-oriented dance and studio bands he played with during the late-'20s. Ross Gorman's studio band, Red Nichols and his Five Pennies, the bands of Roger Wolfe Kahn, Paul Whiteman, and Jean Goldkette ("The first big hot band to rock the east") teamed Lang with the best and most progressive white jazz players of the 20's, including: Bix Beiderbeck (Biederbeck's influence on Lang is common knowledge, and very audible in the late-'20s), Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Frankie Trumbauer, Hoagy Carmichael, Miff Mole, and the list goes on. Most often, though, Lang could be found playing alongside his pal Joe Venuti. The team of Venuti and Lang became an often heard, easily recognized staple of popular music in the late-'20s. Beside the fact that "jazzing" on violin and guitar was a new phenomenon, the ability they both had to excel in either sentimental or hot situations (though they were clearly products of the latter) made Venuti and Lang two of the most in-demand musicians of the 1920's. Their distinct musical signatures—Venuti's jubilant improvisations and Lang's sensitive but driven accompaniment—can be heard (whether together or separately) on a multitude of recordings from that period, in a myriad of settings. This popularity led, in later years, to a less grueling schedule than most musicians could afford, and gave them the freedom to record some of the most unique sides in the history of jazz, unrestricted by the confines of commercial pressure

and utilizing a select group of innovative players.

In November 1926, Venuti and Lang recorded the first of their many violin/guitar duets. These, and a score of subsequent recordings, often with two or three added musicians under the name of Joe Venuti's Blues Four or Blues Five, paved the way for their singular brand of jazz, later dubbed "chamber jazz." These small groups demonstrate an intricate instrumental brand of jazz made for listening, and free from dance band clichés or superfluous singing. The music from these small groups—often penned by Venuti and/or Lang—is always cleverly orchestrated, using a confident mix of virtuosity and tongue-in-cheek fun, with lots of room for soloing.

Around this time, Lang began recording a series of solo guitar pieces—sometimes accompanied by piano—that showcased his talents as a composer as well as a player. (Listen to "Rainbow Dreams," "April Kisses" or "Eddie's Twister"). Here especially can be heard the sweet, sentimental melodies and harmonies of Lang's European background, a quality never far from his playing no matter what the setting. It is a reminder to us now of how closely mated even the hottest jazz was in the early days to the popular, almost sentimental fare.

In the late-'20s, with his career and creativity in full swing, Lang and a handful of other white musicians who were smitten with the black approach to jazz and blues made several "mixed recordings" (blacks and whites together), which, though not unprecedented, were certainly not common in the 1920s. Besides recording with King Oliver, Louis Armstrong and Clarence Williams, Lang recorded more than two dozen sides with black blues artists (including Bessie Smith)—certainly more than any other white musician of his decade. This testifies not only to Lang's passion for the blues, but demonstrates these musicians' commitment to the universality of music. It would be another ten years before blacks and whites playing together was a more regular, accepted occurrence.

In 1929, Lang signed on for an extended stay with Paul Whiteman, where he became close friends with Bing Crosby. Crosby was soon to leave Whiteman, as his own star was beginning to rise, and he asked Lang to be his exclusive accompanist. The two appeared together in a few of Bing's early musicals and also began concertizing extensively in theaters and on radio. But in March of 1933, Lang, who already had a chronically hoarse voice, sought medical attention to relieve a sore throat that had been bothering him for some months. The doctors ordered a routine tonsillectomy, but on the operating table he developed an embolism and died before regaining consciousness. He was 30 years old.

FOUR

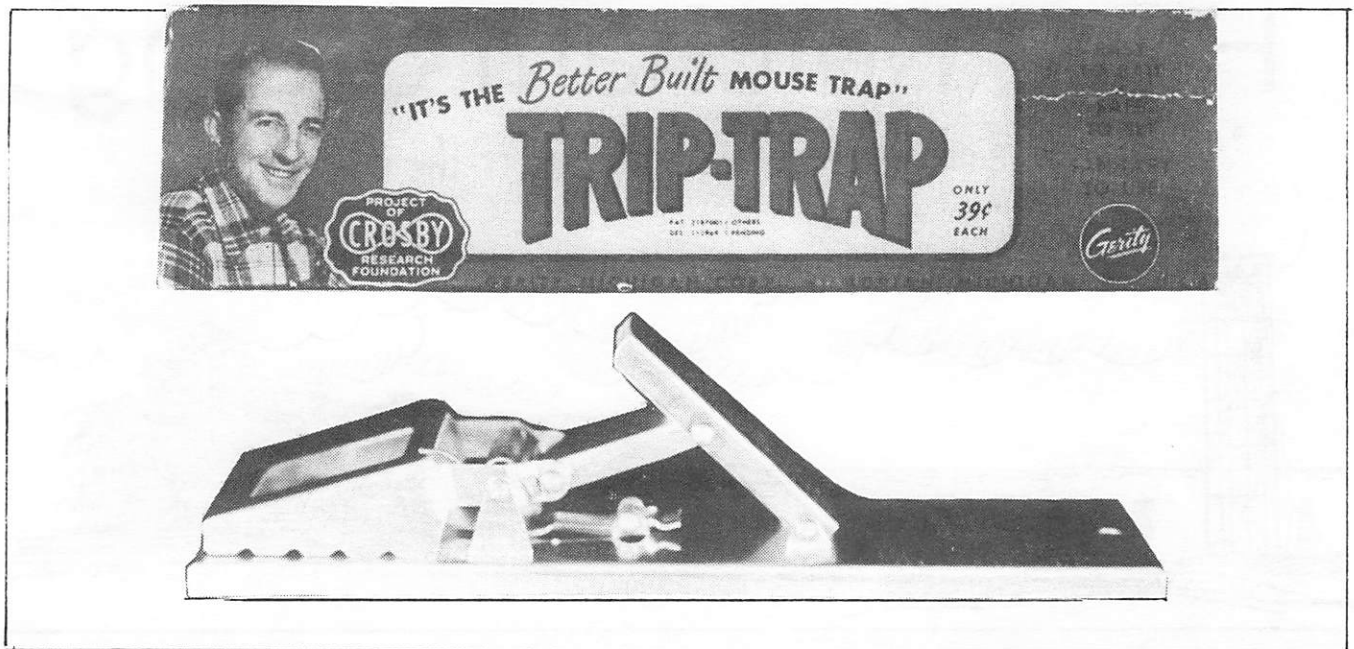
CURIOUS CROSBY COLLECTIBLES

By Mark Scrimger



You'll have to have a pretty keen eye to spot these four rather esoteric Crosby items at your local flea market or swap meet. The scarf shown above has pictures of Bing on it along with those of Bob Hope, Perry Como, and Arthur Godfrey. The ABCs scattered around the pictures probably refer to their status at the time as ABC radio stars. The picture of the Crosby and Hope bottle stoppers below is taken from an antique pricing guide which shows them valued at \$7-\$10 each. I'll take a set at that price!





The mousetrap pictured above gets my vote as the most off-the-wall Crosby collectible. This rather lethal gadget was developed and licensed for production through the Crosby Research Foundation, a Bing-financed endeavor to underwrite new inventions. The scarcity of this item today means it wasn't nearly as successful as they'd hoped it would be.



Thanks to member Dolores Mayo for the Xerox of this unusual Bing Crosby valentine and its accompanying verse. Bing holding a baby cupid is probably meant to reflect the birth of his first son in 1933, so date this card as being produced for the next Valentine's Day in February, 1934. A very nice item indeed!

Woo her with Music
Song, Sang, Sing!
Win her with Music
Bong, Bang, Bing!

My voice is terrible, that's true;
I don't know how to Boo-boo-boo
But all my love is for you-yoo-yoo
And I will ever be true-troo-troo!

Hank Ketcham & Bing

"When the blue of the night meets the gold of the day..."

Thanks, Bing.



Having been involved since the early 1950's in producing program art for the annual Crosby Pro-Am, Hank Ketcham designed this tribute the year after Bing's death. Then Kathryn, his widow, became embroiled in a dispute with the Pebble Beach company and refused to allow Bing's name to be further associated with the tournament. So "Thanks, Bing" was eliminated, and this sketch of the famous finishing hole was used merely as decoration.

Gregg Hammond sent us these excerpts dealing with Bing Crosby from Hank Ketcham's book The Merchant of Dennis (the Menace).

...About this time, a young man born 30 miles down the road was making a big splash with this intimate singing technique, something they called "crooning." Harry Lillis Crosby was then appearing in Mack Sennett films and was a featured vocalist with the Gus Arnheim band at the famous Cocoanut Grove in Los Angeles. Later, we listened to him daily over the Blue Network in his fifteen-minute "Croon for Cremo" (cigars) program.

One of my Queen Anne Hill pals, Ken Dever, and I became avid collectors of Crosby records, scouring junk shops and dusty attics and pestering friends in search of his early discs. By 1938 we had acquired the complete assortment, handling them like rare porcelain and using only freshly-cut cactus needles.

One summer I was a guest at the Dever farm up on the San Juan Islands and brought along a few favorite platters and my portable, hand-crank phonograph. After supper, on star-dusted August evenings, Ken and I would build a bonfire on the beach, light our pipes, stretch out, and dream to the strains of "Black Moonlight," "Soft Lights and Sweet Music," "Learn to Croon," "The Day You Came Along"--while ten yards away, a pod of inquisitive

water and edged closer for a better gander at this unique concert.

The Day They Invented Bing Crosby should be commemorated. He bolstered sagging spirits, lightened weary hearts, brightened eyes, and radiated a philosophy everyone could identify with during the grim thirties. Bing's Thing was inspiring tonic.

During my Hollywood years, I had done quite a lot of hitchhiking along the West Coast, and after enlisting in the Navy I continued to bum rides. Only this time I needed air transportation, so I retired my thumb and hung around the local Naval air stations and waited for hops going my way. I had planned to spend the Christmas of 1945 with friends and family in Seattle and got lucky with a seat in the aft machine-gun turret of a TBM (Torpedo Dive Bomber) that was being ferried to San Diego. From there it would be easy to catch a plane to the Northwest. We left the Potomac River basin on a clear, crisp mid-December afternoon, just me in the crowded tail compartment of the plane, sitting on my parachute and reading the instructions, and the skipper all by himself up in the cockpit fiddling with the controls. We climbed to 5,000 feet on a southwest heading and settled down for our ride to New Orleans, where we would spend the night. (Military ferrying operations were done only during daylight hours.) A couple of F4Us (fighters and

faster'n hell) flew alongside, teased us with a few wingovers, and disappeared. The skipper tuned in on the commercial radio band and, as the winter sun dropped lower on the horizon, he locked onto a Charlotte disc jockey playing Bing's theme song, "When the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day." I put my feet up on a crate of electronic gear and listened to Der Bingle croon--dreaming of mistletoe and eggnog, and feeling good all over.

* * * * *

On Tuesday evening, just as I pulled up to the entrance of the Hotel Richemond, out he strolled, playing the role of Bing Crosby to perfection. We dined on Rolande's exquisite Tafelspitz und Apfel Strudel, sipped on a savory '64 Bordeaux, and sat entranced as our eloquent guest, comfortable as an old shoe, warbled a few bars to newly-born daughter Dania. He brought us up to speed on jokes from the jungles of Nairobi and Hollywood and gave a report on recent golfing conquests.

As well known as he was, and as much as he was adored, for the most part the Europeans left him alone, a luxury of privacy hard to come by in the States and much appreciated by traveling luminaries. Bing was fond of an occasional cigar, especially the vaunted Cuban species, so, the next afternoon, we sauntered around the corner to Davidoff's, one of the world's leading importers of these top-quality hand-rolled tobacco tubes. After much browsing and sniffing, he emerged looking like the cat who swallowed the canary and clutching a fistful of Monte Cristos, about as expensive as they come.

I couldn't resist. "You've come a long way, Mr.Crosby,"

"How do you mean?" he chuckled as we ambled across the streetcar tracks and toward the passage leading to my studio.

"Well, back in the early thirties, remember? You used to do a fifteen-minute broadcast every evening for Cremo Cigars." Though hardly a candidate for the spittoon set in those tender years, I was an avid listener.

He guffawed and chided my memory for trivia but did agree that he had indeed "come a long way." The Cremo was a nickel cigar.

We were fellow members of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of Saint Andrews, and it was on those pastures we later played as a threesome with a local stonemason, the chap who edged out H. L. Crosby in the third round of the British Amateur fifteen years earlier. It was a thoughtful, sentimental

journey for the two former competitors, and while they were reminiscing, hacking their way through gorse and heather, the boy cartoonist was quietly putting together an impressive string of numbers.

Although we cautiously arranged the game to be a private one, by the time we reached the twelfth hole, there were a hundred or more enthusiastic Scots in the gallery, politely reacting to each shot, rooting for their hometown boy, applauding the fluid swings of Misterr Crrrosby, and wondering just who was that white-haired chap in the plaid cap?

As we approached the famous Road Hole, the wicked seventeenth, the crowd was so thickly clustered around Bing that he couldn't safely swing his club.

"Somebody's going to get hurt if I continue," he murmured. "You've got a great game going, so you and Tim finish out and I'll meet you at the clubhouse.

Whereupon he dissolved into the crowd, clattered over the Swilken Bridge, and quickly disappeared behind the ominous gray walls of the R & A. By the time the gallery realized that we were only a twosome, I was on the 18th and two-putting for my par and a round of even fours, my very best effort. Yes, we were under clear blue skies and, no, the wind was not a factor. True, this was a friendly game, not a competition--but just a doggone minute, you guys! I shot a 72! My career round! And I'm as proud as a Palmer or a Nicklaus! So let's hear it for *me!*

Whew!

It was almost nightfall--gloaming, if you please--the telephone operators had alerted the township, and by now the castle was surrounded by eager-eyed fans, many with pencils and pieces of paper, and all of them chanting for a glimpse of their idol of idols. There was no easy escape route, so the hall porter arranged for a decoy operation. A car and driver arrived, and shortly thereafter two gentlemen climbed into the back seat and waved to the staring bystanders as they were whisked away toward the village.

During this little charade, Bing and I stood at the service bar, away from doors and windows, thoroughly enjoying the hospitality of two young lassies who insisted that while waiting we sample a variety of different whiskies stocked by the club. We needed little prodding to participate in this pursuit of spirituous knowledge, and by the time we made our exit, there was narry a soul stirring in the neighborhood.

More About Hank Ketcham

This article from the 34th Bing Crosby Pro-Am Tournament Program gives us an overall view of Hank's connection to Bing and puts the excerpts from Ketcham's book into context.

HANK KETCHAM

Long time Crosby Involvement

Each spring as skiers gather at Geneva airport, skis rampant, to take off for the snow covered alps, they are surprised to see a young looking grey haired chap in summer attire obviously out of his mind with a set of golf clubs.

It is Hank Ketcham, the world renowned cartoonist, about to take off down the snow covered runway for sunny (hopefully) California and the Bing Crosby golf tournament.

Hank first became involved with this divot classic in 1948 when he lived in Carmel. He has been deeply involved ever since, drawing the covers for the programs in 1950 and 1951, illustrating parts of every program since then, giving sage advice (the elimination of display advertising in place of credits at the bottom of each page was his idea, making the Crosby program unique of its kind and a collector's item each year), cartooning for the deaf kids who are invited to the tournament and being an all around good fellow. He also plays a pretty good game of golf.

In recalling the early years of the tournament, Hank reminisces fondly: "It was a 54 hole competition and the entire purse was \$10,000. And a real clambake it was: a wild Calcutta jamboree the night before, and then Bing's Sunday evening windup for 250 dedicated stags assembled at the Monterey Peninsula Country

Club, liberally spiced with music, mirth, steak and spiritus fermenti.

"Everybody was Phil Harris! Picture young Ken Venturi and Harvey Ward bubbling through a song and dance routine; Sam Morse walking through the hall with Johnny Weissmuller on his shoulders . . . ! Ask an old timer to spin a few yarns. There are plenty. Good times warmly recalled."

Henry King Ketcham was born in Seattle, Washington, in 1920. He served a stint in Walt Disney's Mouse Factory and did his basic training as a cartoonist on such magicals as Pinnocchio and Fantasia.

He is the creator of the widely syndicated Dennis the Menace comic strip, books, television and assorted knick knacks springing originally from his son Dennis by a former marriage. Dennis is now an adult and a war veteran, while the cartoon character remains five years old.

He also creates the comic strip Half Hitch, an outgrowth of his lifelong interest in the navy beginning with his own hitch during World War II.

He is the recipient of the prized Billy de Beck Award of the National Cartoonists Society. At the moment he is busy working on a TV special (animated) for Dairy Queen with Dennis deeply involved in our country's bicentennial.

Hank makes his permanent home in an apartment high above Lake Geneva with his charming wife Rolande and their two year old daughter Dania for whose birth Hank barely arrived home in time from the Crosby Clambake.

You can't be more involved than that.

Below: Each year a group of students from the California School for the Deaf in Berkeley are guests of the Bing Crosby Tournament. Hank Ketcham, below, delights the youngsters with a cartoon of Dennis the Menace. Others who entertained were Jack Lemmon and George Blanda. Ed Thornburg, who was police chief for Del Rey Oaks until his death in 1971, was instrumental in bringing the deaf students here for the first time 10 years ago.



THE STORY OF MISSISSIPPI MUD

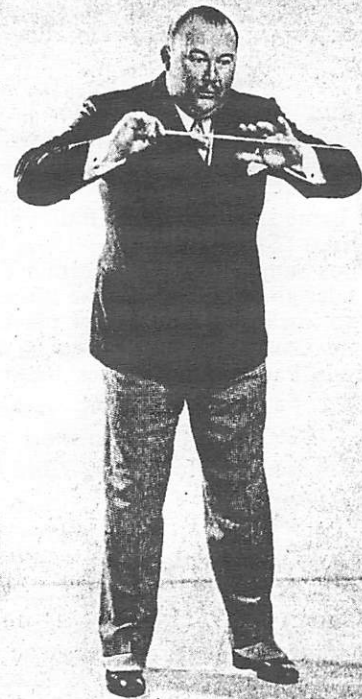
Taken from
THE BIG BANDS SONGBOOK
By George T. Simon

"Harry Barris wrote that tune," Bing Crosby recalled over the telephone from his California home. "He and Jimmy Cavanaugh. Harry was one of the Rhythm Boys, you know. Al Rinker and I had been singing with Paul Whiteman for, oh, I'd say, a couple of years, and then one night Whiteman heard Harry in the Olsen Club—that was run by George Olsen, the bandleader—in New York. Barris was doing a single, singing and slamming the piano and generally breaking things up. Whiteman thought he'd be good for the band, and so he teamed him up with Al and me and we became the Rhythm Boys."

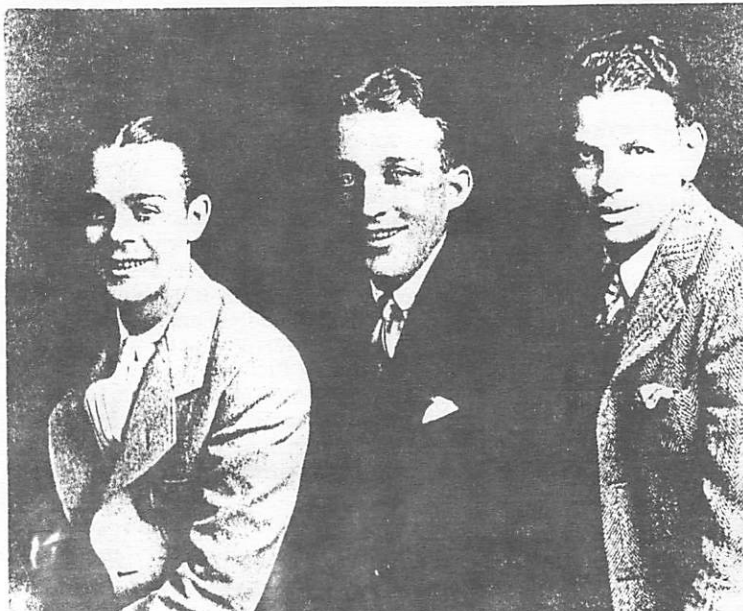
The Rhythm Boys, the best and swiftest vocal group of the late twenties, were featured on numerous Whiteman recordings, but the one for which the trio is best remembered is its snappily arranged and performed version of "Mississippi Mud." "It became so associated with us," Bing pointed out, "that after we left Whiteman and went into vaudeville on our own, we used it sort of as a theme. We had this blown-up figure of Whiteman—it must have been at least seven feet high—and the lips moved as we were being introduced." Bing laughed as he recalled his early career in vaudeville. "You know, we were supposed to be a singing act, but in those days there were so many comedians on the bills that we developed into a talking act." But the theater managers didn't appreciate the Rhythm Boys' attempts at competitive humor, and so they soon went back to singing.

Whiteman, who had a fabulous ear for talent, discovered Crosby and Rinker in 1926 while they were working as a vocal duo in a competing Los Angeles theater. As a duo they were quite adequate. But Whiteman soon realized that Bing's baritone style (tenors were the rage in the popular music of the twenties) was not merely unique, but also musically intriguing. And so, even after the formation of the Rhythm Boys, he continued to feature him as a soloist, building him into such an attraction that by 1930 Bing was able to leave the band and soon thereafter to start his own fabulously successful career.

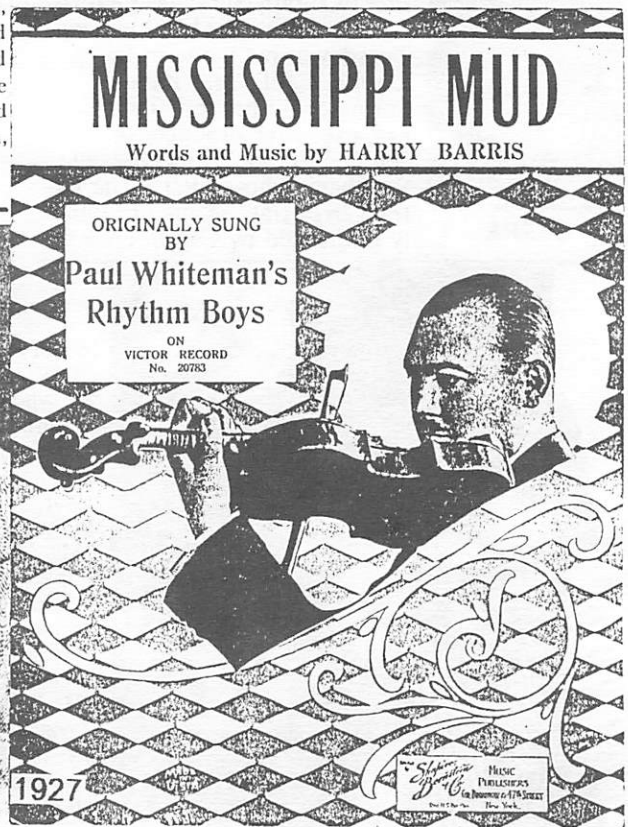
The Whiteman band developed many top stars, not merely because Pops, as he was affectionately known by those close to him, could recognize and appreciate talent, but also because, unlike other bandleaders, he promoted his singers and musicians. Thus, in addition to Crosby, he helped launch the careers of singers Mildred Bailey, Morton Downey and Johnny Mercer, and instrumentalists Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Jack and Charlie Teagarden, Bix Beiderbecke, Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang, Henry Busse and others.



PAUL WHITEMAN



THE RHYTHM BOYS
HARRY BARRIS, BING CROSBY & AL RINKER



Contributed by
Mary Boyer

Deaths

Caulfield dies: Actress Joan Caulfield, star of the 1950s TV series "Sally" and such Western films as "Cattle King" and "Pony Express Rider," died Tuesday. She was 64. Ron Wise, spokesman for Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, said Caulfield was admitted two weeks ago and underwent cancer surgery a day later. Specifics on her disease weren't disclosed. Caulfield may be best known for two 1950s TV series. In "My Favorite Husband" on CBS-TV from 1953-1955, she played the beautiful but scatterbrained wife of banker George Cooper, played by actor Barry Nelson. The show was based on the 1948 radio show of the same name starring Lucille Ball. On NBC-TV's short-lived "Sally" from 1957-1958, Caulfield starred as Sally Truesdale, a former department store sales girl who became the traveling companion to wacky, wealthy widow played by Marion Lorne. Caulfield entered films in the mid-1940s as one of Paramount Pictures' top stars.

Miss Caulfield died on Tuesday, June 18, 1991. She starred with Bing in "Blue Skies" (1946) and "Welcome Stranger" (1947). She also appeared in "Duffy's Tavern" (1945) and "Variety Girl" (1947).



Joan Caulfield with Bing in "Welcome Stranger" (1947). Picture courtesy of Dave Odell.

Capra dead: Director Frank Capra, whose populist vision of the American Dream in such movies as "It's a Wonderful Life" and "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" inspired a generation of filmmakers, has died. He was 94. Capra died in his sleep Tuesday at his home in La Quinta, Calif., near Palm Springs, said his son, Tom Capra, executive producer of NBC's "Today" show. Steven Spielberg, whose "E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial" seems profoundly influenced by Capra, once re-



CAPRA

marked: "Whenever I go on location, I take along a copy of 'It's a Wonderful Life.' I show it to the cast and crew and tell them, 'This is how movies should be made.'" Capra quit films in 1961, angered by the interference of Glenn Ford in the making of "A Pocketful of Miracles." He wrote in his autobiography: "My 'one man, one film' Hollywood had ceased to exist. Actors had sliced it up into capital gains." Capra was married to his second wife, Lucille, for 52 years. She died in 1984.

Mr. Capra died on Tuesday, Sept. 3, 1991. He directed Bing in "Riding High" (1950) and "Here Comes the Groom" (1951).

Fred MacMurray

Compiled From News Services

LOS ANGELES — Fred MacMurray, who played the wise, pipe-smoking father on television's "My Three Sons" and starred in dozens of films including "The Absent-Minded Professor," died Tuesday of pneumonia. He was 83.

Mr. MacMurray died at St. John's Hospital and Health Center in Santa Monica, said a family friend. He was admitted to the hospital Monday.

Mr. MacMurray was being treated for cancer, said a hospital spokesman.

Mr. MacMurray's stage, film and television career spanned more than 50 years. He made movies at a hectic pace, generally playing a genial, persistent leading man, opposite most of the leading actresses of the day.

His best-known credits include family-theme comedies such as "Son of Flubber," "The Shaggy Dog" and "The Happiest Millionaire."

He won his greatest acclaim playing a heel opposite Barbara Stanwyck in "Double Indemnity," the 1944 classic about an insurance salesman involved in a murder plot. It won Academy Award nominations for best picture, script (by director Billy Wilder and Raymond Chandler) and direction.

Mr. MacMurray won many raises at Paramount Pictures, where he spent his first decade in Hollywood. In 1943, his annual salary was nearly \$420,000, making him that year's highest-paid actor and fourth-highest-paid American.

Mr. MacMurray died on November 5, 1991. He is shown at left with Donald O'Connor and Bing Crosby in the 1938 Paramount film "Sing You Sinners."



LOUIS' CHILDREN American Jazz Singers

LESLIE GOURSE

CHAPTER 4

Bing ...and, of Course, Fred Astaire... and Bobby McFerrin

Contributed by Jean-Paul Frèreault

The singer is Rudy Vallee, but for voice control, it's Bing Crosby.

—TAJ MAHAL

Dave Frishberg, jazz pianist, accompanist and composer, born in St. Paul, Minnesota, on March 23, 1933, grew up loving Bing Crosby. Really loving the voice. Crosby had become a big star a couple of years before Frishberg was born. "The best singer we've ever produced for our music," said Frishberg about Crosby. "Also Fred Astaire; [composer-record producer-singer] Johnny Mercer; Louis Jordan [a rhythm-and-blues singer]—I very much love them. And Billie Holiday. They weren't into virtuoso performances; they were into putting the material across. Of all of them, Crosby had the best sound, the best rhythm and the best way of making a lyric live."

It's worth debating. Crosby built a megacareer on his voice. Frishberg has felt his own aesthetics came to a great extent from listening to Crosby. Not Frishberg's sound, which has more in common with Bob Dorough, a breathy, pulsating, rhythmic stylist. But Frishberg sings without bending notes or scatting or trying to sound like an instrument. "I'm pretty austere about keeping to the melody. Let the song do the work," he said. It comes close to sounding like an analysis of Crosby's style.

"Bing was the champ. I never heard anyone handle rhythm as beautifully as he did. He had perfect vocal delivery; he sang in tune. He did acrobatic things with his voice, but you never felt he was reaching for a musical effect.

"I met him at the Concord Pavilion in California a month before he died. I couldn't believe it! I was going to open a show for him by singing six songs. It was like meeting Babe Ruth and being out in the field with him at the same time. So I did my show. Bing shook my hand, complimented me and went onstage. He did thirty minutes of a show. Then the sound system failed. This fantastically expensive system went dead in the middle of his forty-minute medley of hits. I watched a frantic scene backstage. The crew was looking for the source of the electrical failure. They were shouting and screaming. But Bing stood onstage and said nothing and did nothing. The audience waited good-naturedly for fifteen minutes. He said a few things to some ringside people. They laughed a little. Someone backstage said that if it had been another singer, he would have been on a plane on his way out of town by then. But Bing didn't show one little bit of temperament. He finished to a giant ovation.

"He came offstage and said, 'What the --- happened?'

"Oh, the best sound system in the world, they explained; they didn't know why it happened.

"I said to him, 'Well, that can't be the first time it happened.'

"He said, 'It never happened before in my life.'

"That was his last American appearance. He played in England and then died in Spain on a golf course. To me, Bing, Johnny Mercer and Fred Astaire were the first white jazz singers. They sang with the black influence and not in blackface. They brought jazz singing to us as an art."

Bing with his European influence came out and sang it straight, with quality, as the thing itself, not a parody or hype.

In 1977 he told the press that he preferred making records to any other part of show business. In stores specializing in old records, the bins overflow with Bing's records. Music about Christmas, shil-laghs, homes on the range, as well as standard love ballads. Bing alone, Bing and Jolson, Bing and Astaire, Bing and Judy, Bing and Satchmo, Bing and the Dixieland bands, Bing and Frank, Bing and Rosie on "That Traveling Two-Beat"—the old-fashioned beat that New Orleans-born drummer Vernel Fournier, who still plays "in two" sometimes even in New York, has described as "the earthiest, with a certain amount of freedom and happiness. Dixie's a happy music to make you forget the remorse you feel, for example, coming home from the funeral."

That beat suited Crosby. He broke attendance records at the Paramount Theater in 1931 when he was twenty-seven, earning four thousand to seven thousand dollars a week. After the beboppers came along in the 1940s, he said he was confused by what had happened to the music. But he never dropped out of the ranks of that show-business elite known internationally by first names alone.

He sang popular jazz; you can hear it in his easy swing and his phrasing. He lacked great depth of feeling; his voice had, sometimes, a set and monotonous sound. Hoagy Carmichael, the pop-and-jazz-influenced singer-pianist-composer, and Fred Astaire have more feeling in their idiosyncratic singing with their voices so inferior to Bing's relentlessly warm, deep tone. To some extent because he just sang and sang and sang, Crosby became a victim of overexposure, responding to public demand. So the sound of sameness as time went on. But he could swing, especially when the feeling was supposed to be offhand, as, for example, in "In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening," which Bing recorded with Sinatra. Sinatra's voice is brash and harsh compared with Bing's mellow, sensuous tone and subtly accented phrasing that achieves a devil-may-care feeling. Bing's swing nestles in his understatement, a kind of pulse related to the bass, while Sinatra has more of the blare of a trombone.

When Bing sang "Blue Room," you could hear jazz influence in his unexpected phrasing; he accented "blue" instead of "room." He caught you with subtle improvisations, particularly fine on upbeat tunes. If a song were sentimental, his no-frills approach saved it from corniness. He interpreted "Cheek to Cheek" as effortless swing with pauses and emphases that made him the most political of singers—a real vote-getter, as Armstrong was. Bing sang, "I love to go out fishing, in a river or a creek . . ." substituting "creek" for "creek." One homey touch made a lyric his own, offhand love song. Even if he wasn't singing, "I love you," it was implicit in the tone.

He could sing about love and passion and God and complex holidays and passing seasons with such glib control that he marked popular music with a touch of Robert Browning: "God's in his

heaven/All's right with the world." With his confident swing from jazz, he sounded in his element singing with Satchmo.

Born in Tacoma, Washington, raised in Spokane, Crosby had a family that liked music. His parents brought a phonograph and a piano into the house; his brother, Ted, built a crystal set and gave Bing access to popular music played in Seattle. He had an uncle with a strong Irish tenor. And Bing heard the Peerless Quartet, old-time singers Henry Burr, Harry Lauder and John McCormack.

As a boy, Harry Lillis Crosby (his Christian name) went around singing and humming; in his early teens he found a job at Spokane's Auditorium Theater on the vaudeville circuit, where he heard Gallagher and Shean, Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson and George White's *Scandals*.

In college he became friends with Al Rinker, a singer and brother of singer Mildred Bailey. With Rinker, Bing formed a five-piece band, the Musicaladers, in which nobody could read music. Bing never did learn to read it. So he, as drummer and vocalist, and Al, the bandleader, went to a local record store and learned by ear from Paul Whiteman, Fred Waring, the Cotton Pickers, the Memphis Five and the Mound City Blue Blowers. Eventually Bing decided to try his luck as a singer, particularly because he was earning more money from gigs around town than from his part-time job as a prelaw student with a lawyer in town. He quit college and drove to Los Angeles with Rinker. They went to Mildred, who was singing in a speakeasy. She got them an audition with some vaudeville producers, who hired Bing and Al as a singing duo for a show. One revue led to another. Audiences found them delightful, with Bing's voice offset by Rinker's more jazzy cadences.

Bing got a call from the Paul Whiteman office, inviting the boys to an interview. Bing thought it was a joke. But Mildred encouraged them to keep the date. Crosby and Rinker made a hit with Whiteman for a while. Eventually, for sophisticated New York audiences Whiteman teamed the boys up with Harry Barris, dubbing the trio the Rhythm Boys. They pleased crowds, even if they frequently displeased Whiteman—partly because Crosby liked to drink, raise hell and flaunt indifferent attitudes about such things as curtain time.

But in his Whiteman days, Crosby learned a great deal, associating with the legendary horn player Bix Beiderbecke and Red McKenzie, an especially fine singer. And in California Bing met Hoagy Carmichael and made a record of Carmichael's "Stardust." In Chicago when Crosby and Rinker first joined Whiteman, they heard Louis Armstrong. Crosby was a jazz fan from his earliest professional days.

When the Rhythm Boys left Whiteman and went on their own into the Cocoanut Grove in Los Angeles, Bing emerged as a romantic solo. Some biographers say that, at about this time, Bing, who had been nicknamed "Binge" for his drinking scrapes with the law, began to "get religion," becoming ambitious about making money and conscientious about holding on to it. Harry Barris hit his stride as a composer at the Grove. Bing sang Barris' tunes, "I Surrender, Dear" and "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams." The dancing crowd stood still to hear him. Bing began improvising to sound more like a soft, laid-back string bass, some biographers say.

Still in his early twenties, he married Dixie Lee, a starlet and a complicated woman with whom the equally complex Crosby had a long, unhappy marriage. During this period, too, he left the Rhythm Boys to strike out on his own, managed by one of his brothers in a way, some biographers tell us, that ruffled the feelings of his former partners.

By November 1931 Crosby was singing four or five shows a day at New York's Paramount Theater. Afterward he went to hear other musicians. He was seen in the crowd at Harlem's Cotton Club for Cab Calloway's opening night.

Bing got worn out at the Paramount from checking out the local talent while perpetually showing off his own; his marathon partying didn't help. One report says he lost his voice from overuse. A doctor prescribed absolute silence to get rid of the nodes and warts on his vocal cords. He had never had any formal breathing lessons to speak of, had never run scales. So the strain made his vocal cords look knock-kneed instead of parallel. Here's an extreme caricature of what are actually little warts on smooth, glistening, thickened cords.



But his voice came back—if indeed he ever lost it. Stories conflict about Bing's reported bout with nodes; one biography says Crosby was drinking and had missed radio performances prior to his hit at the Paramount. In any case, he recovered from his difficulty. As the years passed, his drinking became less of a problem, while his wife became an alcoholic.

His career simply went on forever. After his Paramount success, he made his first feature film, *The Big Broadcast* of 1932. In 1933 Chesterfield cigarettes gave him a radio contract. He won an Academy Award for *Going My Way* and was nominated for *The Bells of St. Mary's* (and much later for *The Country Girl*). By 1940 he started the *Road* movies with Bob Hope, beginning with *Singapore*, on to *Zanzibar* and *Morocco*, *ad infinitum*. By 1940, too, he had many imitators. Perry Como unabashedly copied Crosby and had the vocal equipment to do a first-rate job of it.

Along the way, his marriage ran out of steam. He and Dixie Lee had been married briefly when she announced plans for a divorce. Bing made a good friend but an incompatible husband for her, she said. Biographers say that Dixie disliked Crosby's remoteness; he preferred to stay out at night with his cronies and increasingly pursued a sportsman's life—an interest his wife didn't share; his work took him away from home for protracted times. When Dixie Lee tried to divorce him, Crosby, a devout Catholic, flew to Mexico to dissuade her. He succeeded; the marriage lasted, but the couple and their four sons never found happiness together. Wife of one of the richest entertainers in the world, an unhappy Dixie Lee died in her early forties of cancer.

Several biographers have tried to unravel the complexities of Crosby's personal life. He has been depicted as ruthlessly ambitious, cold and distant, a sportsman, golfer, and entertainer first and a husband and a father last, a man burdened with an ailing, antipathetic wife—until he married aspiring actress Kathryn Grant.

But he built a seamless public reputation as an unruffled onstage personality, a good sport and a leading man that carried him along when his style of singing went out of vogue. The voice overrode jokes and mimicry. He seduced a mass audience with his average range, conversational ease and unique tone, as Nat "King" Cole would also do.





Photograph by Robert Sherbow/Uniphoto

FORGOTTEN, BUT NOT GONE

When the music stopped in WWII, Sinatra and others recorded on V-Discs

FOR MORE THAN FOUR DECADES, Edmond Philip DiGiannantonio kept a closet full of memories in his Reston, Va., home—vintage World War II recordings never heard by the public. The so-called V-Discs—the V was for victory—had been made only for American servicemen and -women overseas and featured such front-line performers as Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Bing Crosby and Louis Armstrong. Because many were made during the 27-month period (1942–44) when a royalties dispute had prompted a nationwide commercial recording ban, they represented the only music put on record during that period.



▲ Between them, Bing Crosby and Frankie (above, in 1944) recorded 141 V-Discs.

DiGiannantonio, the officer in charge of the Navy's V-Disc program, produced 500 of the estimated 905 recordings himself. Artists worked gratis, and "we would record in studios, hospitals, ships, nightclubs, even hotel ballrooms," he

▲ "It's about time somebody tells the story," says E.P. DiGiannantonio of his cache.

says. Though most of the masters were destroyed in 1949 to prevent under-the-table sales, DiGiannantonio saved 600 virgin pressings.

Now 73, DiGiannantonio—"Digi" to friends—has gotten permission from both the military and the musicians' unions to release the recordings. Proceeds from the 53-song anthology (available by mail from the V-Disc Corp. of Springfield, Va.) will be shared by the surviving artists, their record companies and unions and DiGiannantonio.

According to DiGiannantonio, a Milford, Mass., native who once studied classical violin, 1940s-era music lovers will discover a trove of rarities, including first recordings of Sinatra's "Nancy" and Dinah Shore's "You'll Never Know." Says DiGiannantonio happily: "I want the people of that generation to hear the music again and the current generation to hear some great stuff." ■

Songwriters Dream Of 'White Christmas' —And Its Royalties

Many Try for Yuletide Hits,
But Often They Produce
Cheesy Holiday Platters

By SUZANNE ALEXANDER

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

*My appetite's growin' faster than
Santa's sleigh.*

*Ain't no time for diets, so forget about
bein' thin.*

*'Cause the amount of food that we'll
consume*

It will cause our bellies to balloon.

"Ain't No Time for Diets"

O.K., so "White Christmas" isn't. But rhythm and blues singer Janey Clewer is still hoping her new song about the travails of dieting during the holidays will help push her new Christmas album to the top of the charts. "I think there's a place for both old and new Christmas music," says Ms. Clewer.

Fat chance.

Each December, with visions of dollar signs dancing in their heads, songwriters and singers come out with new Christmas tunes to add to the hundreds that already have been recorded. The 1980s brought such would-be classics as "Wreck the Malls," "Somebody Stole My Santa Claus Suit," "Funky, Funky Christmas," "The 12 Pains of Christmas" and "Santa Got a DWL."

Ho-Ho-Ho to the Bank

Most flop, miserably. "Basically, Christmas is etched in stone as far as the market goes. It's hard to break that," says Troy White, national director of progressive music for Epic Records, a unit of CBS Records Inc. "Artists hope they'll have the next 'White Christmas,' but it doesn't happen."

But they keep trying anyway because writing a hit Christmas tune is the next best thing to cornering the market on mistletoe and Christmas trees: Each year, different singers record the hits—and the royalties flow in. Since 1945, when Mel Tormé

and Robert Wells wrote "A Christmas Song" (better known by its first line: "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire"), more than 550 versions of it have been recorded, by everyone from Ramsey Lewis to Barbra Streisand to Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians. Messrs. Tormé and Wells still each receive more than \$100,000 a year in royalties. "It's a bloody king's ransom," says Mr. Tormé.

"Silver Bells," written in 1950 for a Bob Hope movie called "The Lemon Drop Kid" and since recorded by everyone from Elvis Presley to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, still brings in more than \$50,000 a year in royalties for each of its two writers, Ray Evans and Jay Livingston. "We wrote it very reluctantly because psychologically we believed all the good Christmas songs had already been written," says Mr. Evans. "Luckily, it was first sung by Bing Crosby, so it sold around 125 million records." Bing Crosby also, of course, sang "White Christmas," the best-selling Christmas single ever.

If it's any encouragement to modern-day Christmas song writers, even unlikely melodies have become classics. It took Donald Gardner just 30 minutes to write "All I Want for Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth" in 1944 for a second-grade class he taught in Smithtown, N.Y. Three years later, he played the tune at a music teachers' conference for a friend, a representative of a music-publishing company, who liked it. It was recorded by Spike Jones, released in 1948 and sold 1.8 million records in seven weeks. Mr. Gardner knows of 25 different versions—including one by Dread Zeppelin, a reggae-rock band—but he's sure there are more. "I scout around every year just to see what's there. On Dec. 26, I turn into a pumpkin."

But coming up with a new hit is nearly as hard as spotting Santa coming down the chimney. The last Christmas singles to make Billboard Magazine's weekly top 10 list for pop music, both in December 1958, were "The Chipmunk Song" by David Seville and the Chipmunks (best known words: "Alvin! ALVIN!") and "Jingle Bell Rock" by Joe Beal and Jim Boothe. "Chipmunk" ranked No. 1 and was on the charts for 13 weeks. "Jingle Bell Rock," sung by Bobby Helms, ranked No. 6 and was on the charts for 21 weeks.

A Christmas song hasn't even made it into Billboard's top 100 singles since 1984 ("Do They Know It's Christmas?" which was part of a charity album to aid the Ethiopian famine, and "The Greatest Gift of All" by Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton.) One problem is that the topic is awfully well worn. Ms. Clewer says writing Christmas music is "lyrically confining because you have to conform to Christmas and find some new twist." And most folks prefer golden oldies anyway. "Nat King Cole, Barbra Streisand, Frank Sinatra—all those lines sell steadily every year," says Robert Stapleton, district manager at Tower Records in Boston.

Schmaltz vs. Smirks

Moreover, new Christmas songs get little radio air time because stations have curtailed playing carols. Unlike the

Christmas shopping season, which has expanded, now starting before Thanksgiving, the Christmas carol season has been shrinking. Once as long as six weeks, it now is only two or three weeks.

KJLH in Los Angeles, for example, began playing 10 Christmas songs a day about 18 days before Christmas. It has 14 carols on its frequent-play list, only four of which were released in 1990. The top requested carol? "The Christmas Song," recorded by Nat King Cole in 1946.

For lesser-known artists, this is bad news. "Lack of exposure of new songs prevents them from being accepted," says Harold Bronson, managing director of Rhino Records Inc., a Los Angeles record company. So, to compete with the songs of Christmases past, many musicians have abandoned schmaltz for smirks. Consider 1987's "Wreck the Malls:"

Wreck the malls this Xmas season

Fa-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la.

Blow your cash for no good reason

Fa-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la.

A Trend Toward Realism

Such songs irritate purists like Mr. Tormé, 65. Of 1986's "Santa Got a DWL," Mr. Tormé says, "How would real Christians feel if Santa came home drunk?" Adds Clarence James, an analyst for a Stamford, Conn., finance company who buys a few Christmas albums every year, "Christmas is not a funny time of year. It has very serious meaning. Singing 'Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer' [a 1979 tune] isn't my idea of Christmas.

... Just by the very title, I wouldn't buy it. If I heard it on the radio, I'd change the station."

Judging by some recent hits, realism may be in. Barry Manilow's hot-selling new album, "Because It's Christmas," which has sold 600,000 copies in just one month (Billboard's No. 40 album this week), includes a song he co-wrote with the late Johnny Mercer titled "I Guess There Ain't No Santa Claus." Some of the lyrics:

*I got evenings to share that nobody will
spare.*

I guess there ain't no Santa Claus.

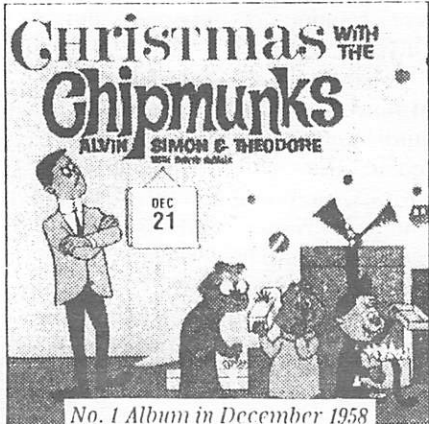
*I don't flirt. I don't dance. 'Cause I
don't get a chance.*

I guess there ain't no Santa Claus.

Why so gloomy? "I didn't want to write about 'Winter Wonderland' or 'Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.' I think we have enough of that," says Mr. Manilow. "I wanted to write more of a jazz album... aimed at adult, romantic feelings."

Eric Mercury's 1989 song "Christmas Presence" on the "Christmas Cheers from Motown" album tells about a little girl longing for her absent father to return home for Christmas. Mr. Mercury is sure that the song is so close to reality for many of today's children of divorced parents that it just might become a classic. "White Christmas, chestnuts roasting, I love that stuff. But it doesn't exist anymore," he says. "It's a different society now than when all those songs were written."

Wall St. Journal 12-21-90
Courtesy Ernest Sutkowski



Bing Featured in London's *The Sunday Times* Supplement, "1000 Makers of the Twentieth Century"



BING CROSBY

US, 1900-1977, singer

Bing Crosby (above right) was perhaps the most successful entertainer of all time. Certainly he sold more gramophone records than anyone, recorded more titles and delivered the most popular song ever written, *White Christmas*. He was also the top Hollywood box-office star for five consecutive years. He came from Tacoma, Washington and began singing in a trio at university in Spokane. Soon he was with the Paul Whiteman band and made his movie debut in the revue *King of Jazz* (1930). Crosby's crooning style and affable

persona propelled him into triple stardom, of radio, records and films, his pre-eminence not really challenged until the advent of Frank Sinatra (qv) in the Forties, who readily acknowledged his debt to the master. Not only did Crosby record many of the great standard songs of the time (his radio shows were introduced with his theme *Where the Blue of the Night*), but Crosby also excelled as a light comedian in *The Road* series of films with Bob Hope, and he won an Oscar for his portrayal of a Catholic priest in *Going My Way* (1944). Much of his appeal lay in his ordinary fella approach. He fos-

tered the impression that singing his way was within the scope of anybody. However, his rich, full tones, perfect pitch and melodic phrasing were actually the fruit of years of application and artistry, although he relied solely on his ear and never sight-read. During his first marriage, to Dixie Lee by whom he had four sons, he was something of a martinet at home, but when, after widowhood, he married Kathryn Grant in 1957, he had mellowed considerably. He was still recording late in life and died in the course of one of his favourite relaxations, around of golf GP

Ernest Sutkowski sent us a photocopy of the page featuring Bing in this continuing series in *The Sunday Times*. As Ernie writes, the birth date is incorrect, "perhaps" could have been omitted before "the most successful entertainer....," and the word "martinet" could have been eliminated; but as a whole the writer did all right by Bing. The caricature is *interesting!*

NEW RELEASES

Contributors: Charles Baillie, Steve Lewis, Bob Lundberg, Mark Scrimger, Ernest Sutkowski, Greg Van Beek, and Frank Whittaker

NEW CD'S

BING CROSBY—THAT'S JAZZ Pearl-Flapper [?] (UK). Contents: *St. Louis Blues*; *Please*; *Temptation*; *Did You Ever See a Dream Walking?*; *A Ghost of a Chance*; *Down the Old Ox Road*; *Black Moonlight*; *Where the Blue of the Night*; *The Last Round-Up*; *Someday Sweetheart*; *How Deep Is the Ocean?*; *Our Big Love Scene*; *Song of the Islands*; *Dinah*; *I'm an Old Cowhand*; *Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams*; *Blue Hawaii*; *Sailor Beware*; *Sweet Leilani*; *Pennies from Heaven*; *Happy-Go-Lucky You*; *Thanks*.

BING CROSBY AND JIMMY DURANTE—START OFF EACH DAY WITH A SONG J.S.P. Records CD-701 (UK). Songs that include or feature Bing: *I Surrender Dear*; *I'm Crosby the Well-Dressed Man*; *Blue Skies*; *Dark Eyes*; *The Song's Gotta Come from the Heart*; *Where the Blue of the Night*; *Crosby & Durante's Campaign Song*; *Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Shean*; *Whatever Happened to Vaudeville?*; *While Strolling Through the Park*; *Chidabee-Ch-Ch (Yah-Yah-Yah)*; *It's Not His Mind, It's His Music*; *Where the Blue of the Night*; *A Gal in Calico*; *And Then It's Heaven*; *Uncle Remus Said*; *How Are Things in Glocca Morra?*; *Feudin' and Fightin'*; *I'll Dance at Your Wedding*; *As Long As I'm Dreaming*.

BING CROSBY AND JUDY GARLAND — ALL THE CLOUDS WILL ROLL AWAY J.S.P. Records CD-702 (UK). Songs that include or feature Bing: *Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie*; *Old Buttermilk Sky*; *Gotta Get Me Somebody To Love*; *Connecticut*; *Huggin' and Chalkin'*; *Tearbucket Jim*; *And So to Bed*; *Love Somebody*; *Rambling Rose*; *For Me and My Gal*; *Who*; *Embraceable You*; *Confess*; *The Donovans*; *Katrina*; *Ma, He's Makin' Eyes at Me*; *Maybe It's Because*; *Sam's Song*; *I Cross My Fingers*; *Mona Lisa*; *Goodnight Irene*; *All My Love*; *Tzena, Tzena, Tzena*; *High on the List*; *Pretty Baby*.

BING CROSBY AND SOME JAZZ FRIENDS GRP Records GRD-603 (Decca Jazz Series). Contents: *Your Socks Don't Match*; *My Baby Said Yes*; *Basin Street Blues*; *Yes, Indeed*; *Someday Sweetheart*; *Moonburn*; *Pennies from Heaven*; *The Waiter and the Porter*; *The Birth of the Blues*; *Blue*; *After You've Gone* (two takes); *Pinetop's Boogie Woogie*; *On the Sunny Side of the Street*; *I Still Suits Me*; *I Ain't Got Nobody*; *Deep in the Heart of Texas*; *When My Dreamboat Comes Home*; *Gone Fishin'*.

BING CROSBY—A VISIT TO THE MOVIES Laserlight 15411. Contents: *Thoroughly Modern Millie*; *Talk to the Animals*; *Ding Dong, The Witch Is Dead*; *Where the Rainbow Ends*; *What's More American*; *Up, Up and Away*; *High Hopes* (alternate take); *My Friend the Doctor Says*; *Puff, the Magic Dragon*; *Chim Chim Cheree*; *Love Is Blue*. (From Pickwick SPC-3583, with *Where the Rainbow Ends* (not on LP) substituted for *(I Call You) Sunshine*.)

BING CROSBY — TRUE LOVE AND OTHER ROMANTIC FAVORITES PolyTel Elite 845 471-2 (Canada). *True Love* (w/R. Clooney); *The Tender Trap*; *Misty*; *Chances Are*; *Count Your Blessings*; *Try a Little Tenderness*; *I Wish You Love*; *Unchained Melody*; *Come Rain or Come Shine*; *Love's Old Sweet Song*. (Not new-issued 1988—but just came to our attention. Same songs as in the Silver Eagle set.)

BING CROSBY—WHITE CHRISTMAS Creative Sounds, Ltd. 4923. Contents: *White Christmas* (1957); *Adeste Fideles*; *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*; *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (w/F. Sinatra); *Silent Night*; *Away in a Manger*; *Jingle Bell Swing* (w/Gary Crosby); *That Christmas Feeling*; *Silent Night*. (Songs from 12/20/50 Chesterfield Show and 12/20-57 TV show "The Frank Sinatra Christmas Show with Bing Crosby.")

GOLDEN THROATS 2 Rhino R2-71007, \$12.98. (Also available on cassette R4-71007, \$8.98). Song by Bing: *Hey Jude*. (Obviously meant as no tribute to Bing and the other 12 artists, this record is described by Rhino as "14 more absurdly vacuous recordings...14 ill-conceived attempts by the stars of the 60's to sing pop music like the pros." Some of you might like to own it as a curiosity.)

BLUE SKIES (Original 1946 soundtrack from Bing's movie). Radiola 2095. Available from Mr. Nostalgia, as above, for \$10.98 (CD) or \$6.98 (tape), plus shipping.

THE ANDREW SISTERSON RADIO (1945-1950) Radiola 1033. Guests include Bing Crosby, other information unknown. Available from Mr. Nostalgia, P. O. Box 26494, Tamarac, FL 33320 for \$10.98 (CD) or \$6.95 (cassette), plus shipping.

BOB HOPE'S CHRISTMAS PARTY (1945) Victorious 1031. Contains Bing material, other information unknown. Available from Mr. Nostalgia, as above, for \$15.98 plus shipping.

THE COMPLETE BIX BEIDERBECKE IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER. I.R.D. Records [number unknown] (Italy). This 9-compact disc set is almost exactly the same as the Joker 14-LP set released some years ago. Ernest Sutkowski purchased the set for \$133.95 plus tax at Tower Records, Manhattan. There are 8 or 9 additional tracks on the CD set, one of which is *Metropolis*. Each CD is titled; examples are "Fidgety Feet," "Sunday," "Thou Swell," etc.

BING CROSBY WITH THE JOHN SCOTT TROTTER ORCH. & FRIENDS. Magic 48. Available from Mr. Nostalgia for \$17.98 plus shipping. Includes: *Painting the Clouds with Sunshine; Bing's Chat; Shanghai; Bing's Chat; Diane; Hot Canary; Lady Be Good; I've Just Got To Fall in Love; How High the Moon; Come On to My House; You Was; Bing's Chat; Panama; Up the Lazy River; Lazy Bones; Old Rocking Chair's Got Me; Bali Hai; Sunflower; Easter Parade; Why Can't You Behave?; So Tired; Everywhere You Go.*

BING CROSBY-BIG BAND DAYS. Echo Jazz EJCO-12 (also available on tape and LP). Contents: *Lady of Spain; P.S. I Love You; If This Isn't Love; Old Buttermilk Sky; Mona Lisa; Don't Let the Stars Get in Your Eyes; Hawaiian Wedding Song; Song from Moulin Rouge; Five Minutes More; Wish You Were Here; Jamboree Jones; It's Beginning To Look a Lot Like Christmas; Undecided; I Get Ideas; Memphis Blues; A Kiss To Build a Dream On.*

VIDEOS

THE MAGIC OF BING CROSBY, PART ONE. A*Vision 50294-3, 55 minutes, \$19.95. Includes: *Old Man River; Just One More Chance, It Had To Be You; June in January; Learn To Croon; Basin Street Blues; Silent Night; You're Getting To Be a Habit with Me; I Left My Heart in San Francisco; Now You Has Jazz; Y'All Come; Walls of Jerico; The Christmas Song; Jingle Bells; Don't Fence Me In; Blue of the Night; When It's Twilight on the Trail; Aren't you Glad You're You; Stay as Sweet as You Are; There Will Never Be Another You; True Love; White Christmas.* Also contains interviews with Kathryn Crosby and others.

Entertainment Weekly carried this encouraging review by Gary Giddins:

"At the time of his death in 1977, the legendary crooner Bing Crosby had been a touchstone in American popular culture for so long that many people considered him passé, if not obsolete. Now there are signs of a Crosby revival—a glut of record reissues and video releases of his movies—and Crosby's gorgeous baritone and incomparable laid-back phrasing are attracting a whole new audience. This hour-long compilation of 20 rare clips is a fine

introduction, drawing on film shorts he made in the early '30s, before achieving Hollywood stardom, and TV shows he made in the '50s and '60s, when his fame had achieved nearly mythic proportions. Many classics are included, notably two collaborations with Louis Armstrong (what a delightful blending of timbres they produce on "Basin Street Blues"). The credit roll fails to identify the clips, which considering their rarity is a particular annoyance, but the chance to see them again is a tonic. [Grade:] A."

Some of Bing's fans were active in helping to put this excellent tape together. We should especially mention Charlie Baillie, who provided a lot of materials to the producers. A second volume is scheduled to be issued soon.

BOB HOPE-THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES. Goodtimes Home Video 8090. Found by Greg Van Beek in the "cheap video" bin in a department store for \$9.99. This is an hour-long documentary of Hope's rise to fame, with many clips from films and TV. Bing is shown quite often: in a golf sequence with Hope, on TV with Hope, and also in the "trailer" for *Road to Morocco*. In a clip from a 1962 Hope show, Bob mentions that President Kennedy would be staying at Bing's Palm Springs home, saying the President visits all disaster areas!

WORLD WAR II-THE MUSIC VIDEO. Label information unavailable, but this can be purchased from Harriet Carter, Dept. 31, North Wales, PA 19455, for \$19.98 plus \$4.98 shipping. Described as "The songs we sang, the stars we loved," the video features 20 songs by such artists as Spike Jones, Carmen Miranda, Dinah Shore, Judy Garland, Lena Horne—and Bing Crosby.

YOU'RE THE TOP, THE COLE PORTER STORY. ISL Vid. Available from Mr. Nostalgia for \$24.95 plus shipping. This tape is hosted and narrated by Bobby Short and features Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Ethel Merman, Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Mary Martin, Bing Crosby, and others.

ON TELEVISION: The *TV Guide* recently printed this article about *Taz-Mania*, which was presented on the Fox network:

When Warner Bros. went back to its roots last year for *Tiny Toon Adventures*, the result seemed a glorious one-shot achievement in animation and humor. But the Warner revival continues in *Taz-Mania*, another well-drawn and sharply written comedy. Here, the Tazmanian Devil, long a supporting player in the Warner universe, moves to the front. He's billed as a teenage party animal and pretty good kid, while his father is an animalized version of Bing Crosby, pipe and all, recalling the old Warner cartoons in a way that's probably lost on kids but perfect for their parents.

Books

THE CROSBY COLLECTION 1926-1977; PART ONE: 1926-1934, by Fred Reynolds. Available from John Joyce, Ravenswood House, Chowdene Bank, Low Fell, Gateshead NE9 6JP, United Kingdom. It sells for £12.50. We do not know of any distributor in the U.S.A.

We announced the forthcoming publication of this book in the July 1991 *Bingang*. It arrived from England the other day, and we are glad to say that it lives up to the standards Fred Reynolds set for himself in *The Road to Hollywood* and *The Road to Bing Crosby*.

Bing's recordings are listed in chronological order, with composers, orchestra, and matrix numbers listed for each song. Alternate take information is given, some of it reprinted with permission from Colin Pugh's book, *Alternate Bing Crosby*.

The most valuable feature of the book is Fred's analysis of each song and performance. His critiques are fair and unbiased. If the song or performance is not so good, he does not hesitate to say so. It is quite apparent that Fred has listened to every one of these recordings and is thoroughly familiar with this material.

The first volume of this set contains a biographical section, a well-written introduction, a list of Bing's best-selling records, a listing of recordings with whistling, and indexes of other vocal artists, composers and lyricists, and song titles.

A great job! We are looking forward to the next volume.

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

Norman Wolfe, a member of Club Crosby, is currently researching a new book on Bing. Norman's goal is "to present a clear, objective record, an analysis of the man, his work and what it means in the annals of popular music and culture." He has already conducted several interviews with those who were close to Bing, and he is working with several Crosby collectors to seek out his information.

Mr. Wolfe is co-founder of Cohn & Wolfe, the largest public relations firm in the Southeast, and is an experienced writer.

Let us know if any of us can help you, Norman!

In September the *Los Angeles Times* ran a column by Liz Smith which contained the following paragraph:

Has there ever been a comprehensive, objective, authoritative biography of a man who was "arguably the most popular American entertainer of all time"? (This quote comes from Morrow's senior editor Paul Bresnick, who has announced that now his company will publish such a bio of--Bing Crosby.) Gary Giddins, a Voice staffer and winner of three ASCAP Deems Taylor awards for excellence in music criticism, is the one who will write this, for 1995 publication. So far, all of Gary's letters to Bing's widow,

Kathryn Crosby, have come back unopened. The legendary Bingle has been dead for 15 years. Maybe Kathryn should cooperate for history's sake.

Editor's Note: Take a look at Gary's review of *The Magic of Bing Crosby* video in this issue. He would seem to be a good choice for this assignment!

Tapes

BING CROSBY AND KATE SMITH-HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS. RCA Special Products DPK1-0742. This one has been around for a while, but we just became aware of it. Side 1 features Bing, and Side 2 is by Kate Smith. Bing Sings *A Time To Be Jolly*; *I Sing Noel*; *Round and 'Round the Christmas Tree*; *A Christmas Toast*; *Christmas Is*.

WINTER 1991



500 Washington St.
San Francisco, CA 94111

Dec. 9: "Crosby Croon Alike Contest", the annual search for someone to "sing like Bing". Finalists sing "White Christmas" at Pier 39 and vie for first place and a trip to Hawaii. Chanticleer leads the Christmas carol sing-along. Entrants and audience are encouraged to bring a gift to benefit those in need at Laguna Honda Hospital. Information call (415) 981-8030. Sponsored by Magic 61 and KRON TV.

It's nice to see that this has become an annual event. (See July 1991 issue.)
Courtesy of Helen Tolton.

Q We would be grateful if you could answer a question dealing with the height of the late Bing Crosby. We realize that the press releases of his time had him much taller than he actually was, but how tall was he?—A. & M. Hinkle, Bridgewater, N.J.

A Crosby was 5 feet 7 without lifts in his shoes.

SWAPS AND SUCH

WANTED: "Bing Crosby Coloring Book," with bright red cover and a huge picture of Bing wearing a plaid-striped shirt. Sold in the early 50's. Write: Jeff Geist, 60 - 15th Ave., Elmwood Park, NJ 07407.

WANTED: 45 rpm singles: *Tie a Yellow Ribbon/It's Not Where You Start* and *The Second Time Around/Incurably Romantic*. Also these LP's: RCA 2-LP set, *How the West Was Won*; Reprise FS 2021, *Robin & the Seven Hoods*; Reprise RS6127, *Bing, Dino 'n' Dixie*; United Artists UAG 30142, *Joe Bushkin Celebrates 100 Years of Recorded Sounds*. Greg Van Beek, 929 Hillcrest St., West Bend, WI 53095.

FOR SALE: Unplayed set of Bing's *Musical Autobiography* record set, complete with key. Will sell at a reasonable price. John R. Shaw, 351 Midway Blvd., Novato, CA 94947.

WANTED: VCR tape of Bing's last Christmas TV special, "Merry Old England." Scott Daniel Hughes, 600 East Weddell, Suite 283, Sunnyvale, CA 94089.

A GOOD SOURCE of Bing Crosby and other movie star postcards is: John and Sandy Millns, 40 North Third St., Waterville, OH 43566. They also carry cards covering many other areas of interest. They do a lot of out-of-town shows, so be patient for their response.

I NEED copies of Brunswick 12" 20102 and red label Decca Collector's Series 11013 and 11014 on 78 rpm. Please contact me if you have spares for sale or trade. Mark Scrimger, P. O. Box 172, Parma, MI 49269, (517) 531-5484.

WANTED: Video tapes of these movies: *Welcome Stranger* and *Emperor Waltz*. Anthony Calónico, 711 N. Northwest Hwy., Park Ridge, IL 60068.

WANTED: Cassette tape of Bing's *When My Dreamboat Comes Home* (with Bob Crosby's Bobcats). Brian Pearce, 137 Brunswick St #2A, Jersey City, NJ 07302.

FOR SALE: "Bing Crosby (Original Recording) White Christmas," a colorful phonocard postal cover from Germany. Has an actual record adhered to the front. Available from: Marlen Stamps & Coins, Ltd., 156 B Middle Neck Road, Great Neck, NY 11021 (516) 482-8404. Size of card: 8 x 5 inches. Price: \$25 plus \$3 postage.

WANTED: Tape or record of *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*, by Bing Crosby. David Lobosco, 2533 Rose Drive, Glenshaw, PA 15116.

FOR SALE: My duplicates of Crosby LP's. Some are new and still sealed, purchased recently at a Fair Mall. Contact me for a list or let me know what you need. Price: \$20 per LP, including shipping. Stanley Wayman, 18 Beckerle St., Danbury, CT 06811-4608.

WANTED: Video tape of "Just an Echo" (Paramount 2-reeler, 1933) with Bing Crosby and Mary Kornman. Dave Odell, 9722-88 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta T6E 2P9, Canada.

DISPOSING of complete Bing Crosby collection. 1500+ 45's, 78's, LP's, V-Discs, 10" to 16" non-commercial pressings, alternate takes. More than 50 books, 800 8" x 10" photos, 300 pieces sheet music, 6 16mm films, 45 27" x 41" movie sheets, 1 1964 Bing Show script. Inquiries, general or specific want lists welcomed. Rarer items: Dr. Mize's *Bing*; Ted Crosby's *Bing*; 16" shellac soundtrack to *King of Jazz*; LP's: *High Tor* and *Sunday in Hollywood*; Decca tests and acetates; plus much, more more! Jack Souther, 2011 - 44th Ave. San Francisco, CA 94116.

OTHER CROSBY ORGANIZATIONS

BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quentin Rinehart, Editor *The Crooner*
P. O. Box 216
Tacoma, WA 98401

BING'S FRIENDS AND COLLECTORS SOCIETY

Hobie and Cathie Wilson, Pres./Treas.
236 Andrieux St.
Sonoma, CA 95476-6909

BINGTHINGS SOCIETY

Bob Lundberg, President
4333 South 41st, #28
Tacoma, WA 98409

INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE (U.K.)

F. B. Wiggins, American Representative
5608 North 34th St.
Arlington, VA 22207

QUEENSLAND BING CROSBY SOCIETY

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Queensland, Australia 4055

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